

**Being, Rhetorical
Aristotle, Heidegger and the Temporal Ontology of Rhetoric**

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Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the

Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

University of Pittsburgh

2013

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

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2013

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University of Pittsburgh, 2013

The following dissertation project seeks to answer the question what it means to call a thing rhetorical. Contemporary rhetorical theory currently places more emphasis upon the relations between speakers, hearers and act or form of speaking itself, rather than the things of which speakers and hearers speak *about*. Such an orientation makes the relation between speaking and the things *with which we deal* and *of which we speak* unclear. I argue, in contrast, that rhetoricity, or a thing's capability of being-rhetorical, indicates a spoken relation to things that can become otherwise in shared time. The spoken relation is not simply a matter of symbols or representations; it expresses and makes manifest speakers' and hearers' concrete, present and immediate relation to the world. Rhetoricity expresses human beings' existence and experience with things as they are in everydayness initially, generally and for the most part.

The dissertation applies an analysis of temporality, elucidated by the early (1919-1929) hermeneutic, phenomenological philosophy of Martin Heidegger, to Aristotle's *Rhetoric*. I then perform a critical reading of Heidegger's later "Dialogue on Language" (1954), in which the philosopher rejects rhetoricity as a fundamental way of relating to the world in speaking and seeks to escape into a philosophico-poetic mode of language. The critical reading illustrates the conditions under which speaking engages with things individually in terms of sameness over time, rather than as embedded in shared matters of pressing temporal concern for everyday life. The dissertation closes with a reflection upon a recurrent, recursive conversation among rhetorical theorists over the past 40 years on the methods, objects and aims of rhetorical theory. I

suggest that a re-orientation toward things in their concrete, material relation to everyday life offers a stronger foundation for the study of rhetoric looking into the future.

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PREFACE

While fiddling with some final lingering edits, I was searching the Internet for the citation of a quotation from Heidegger and stumbled upon a marvelous bit of ephemera. A question was posed to Yahoo! Answers, a tried and true source for grammatically, logically, ethically and aesthetically raw and uncut public inquiry. Questions, from the surprisingly existential and moving (“[How Can I Get Taller?](#)”)¹ to the Dadaist (“[I have a Sun in Leo moon in pisces and cancer rising describe my personality please !!?](#)”)² solicit answers that themselves span the enlightened and the deeply dubious. “Jamie’s” question, however, was a beautifully absurd gem: “[Is the past, present and future happening all at once?](#)”³ The basic gist of the following 300 pages is “yes.”

In the work that follows, I argue that things do not simply exist in isolation—they arise in the course of doing. This dissertation is no different. I have received a great deal of support,

¹ From “Yawn” (“How Can I Get Taller?” errors in original):

im a 14 year old girl, and im 5'7ish i really want to be tall, to help me be a goaly, and I have trouble with kids at school, and well no one will think of hurting me as long as im taller my mom is 5' 4 and 3 quarters my father is 6'5 or taller
I really just want to be tall

² The substance of “Cheryl’s” question was brief (“My sun is in Leo...”): “My birthday is August 16th”

³ “Jaime” is more interested in whether or not the simultaneity of past, present and future would explain *déjà vu* and pre-cognition:

An interesting idea to think about...what if it is?
"time is eternally present, that is, that past, present and future are all happening together in some way" -the person who wrote about this [J.W. Dunne, *An Experiment with Time*], claims that this is why we have déjà vu, its a weird way of thinking about time...

Dunne believes there is a particular individual experience of time and an enlarged objective time, and that humans can access this time in pre-cognitive dreaming, which sadly is not the position this dissertation defends.

inspiration and friendship through the course of writing, at both the University of Pittsburgh where I studied and the University of Rhode Island where I worked.

We begin with what came before. First must go to my parents, because they have put up with me for far longer than anyone else, and sometimes did so beyond all rhyme and reason. To my father John Morrison, who always encouraged my stubborn woolly studiousness, even when this daughter of a psychologist became a wild-eyed humanist, and beamed when a new Dr. Morrison joined the family. To my mother C. Denise Dinnen, who taught me to accept nothing but the very best I could do or be, and to demand the best from others. I also want to thank my excellent friends and mentors at James Madison University, particularly Roger Hall, who brought out my creativity as a playwright, Andrew Cohen who demanded rigor as a radical economist. Michelle Lancaster was both my devastatingly talented debate partner and closest friend. And thanks most of all to Peter K. Bsumek, in whose footsteps I proudly followed. I would like to extend my gratitude to the entire intercollegiate debate community, who became my family over the course of four years (and another three years while coaching), and who are (fortunately for me) so numerous that I do not have room to list names. A collective thank you must suffice.

Next, deep thanks to my teachers and friends at the University of Pittsburgh Department of Communication. I was lucky to be surrounded by brilliant young scholars for five years at the University of Pittsburgh, and many of the arguments to come were first seeds planted during conversations in long van rides and over beers. Thanks to the fellow debate coaches of the William Pitt Debating Union, who taught me how to bring concepts and theories from our classes to life in the context of contemporary political and social argument and deliberation: John Rief, Matt Brigham, Brent Saindon, Eric English, Steve Llano, Carly Woods, Damien Pfister,

Kelly Congdon, as well as the folks who came before my time as an assistant coach: Marcus Paroske, Eli Brennan, Ron von Burg, Marci Halpin. In addition, thank you to my friends and peers whose thought and style influenced my own, in particular, Michael Vacaro, Michele Kennerly, Hugh Curnutt, Carlton Gholtz, and Paul Johnson.

I have also been gifted with incredibly thoughtful teachers. If I have an ounce of Gordon R. Mitchell's analytic ability, John Lyne's ecumenical pragmatism, James E. McGuire's erudition, William Fusfield's impassioned critique, Joan Leach's elegant balance of breadth and depth, Henry Krips' intellectual adventurousness, or Peter Simonson's rigorous sense of academic responsibility, I will count myself lucky. The thought, but most importantly the larger pedagogical spirit that courses through this dissertation is, of course, that of John Poulakos, who first encouraged me to aspire to be a iconoclast. A big thank you as well to graduate program assistants Brandi Spencer McClain and Janet D'Onofrio, whose professional dedication and care for the graduate students in navigating the practical side of the university are equally inspiring. Finally, I am deeply grateful to outside reader Erik Garrett for his crucial help at the last minute—it is no exaggeration to say that his joining of the committee saved the day, and he has provided important philosophical insight to the dissertation, particularly in expanding the dissertation's ethical claims.

A young communication scholar could find no better place to work than the University of Rhode Island Department of Communication Studies, and no better role models and mentors than in its faculty. First and foremost, thank you to Lynne Derbyshire, whose fierce advocacy and personal support have been invaluable. Kevin McClure consistently went out of his way to provided crucial guidance and feedback for early drafts, as well as much-needed advice and encouragement. Adam Roth welcomed us into the URI fold and I look up to him as a perfect

model of a dynamic and responsible young faculty member. Finally, to Sandy Baker, who keeps the office not just running efficiently, but brings friendliness and warmth to the entire department community.

For the past two years, I have been involved in the Beauty Salon, an interdisciplinary working group on aesthetics, producing both research and community radio. Without my collaboration with the Beauty Salon, the following dissertation would simply not exist. To Karen de Bruin, who may have the most beautiful relation to language I have ever seen; to David Howard, who brings beauty to life in literally in *the material*, in the folds of fabric and sparkle of thread; and to Cheryl Foster, who has mastered the full art of academia as a brilliant scholar, unparalleled teacher and skillful navigator of the university. To the three of you, I mean thanks in its deepest sense. We are never more aware of our being with one another than when we are given the gift of life from others, and Karen, David and Cheryl made my life not simply easier or better, but more beautiful. They make me wish to run toward the world and take it up. When Heidegger talks about such an experience, he calls it *graciousness*. The greatest gift we can give to one another is grace. Thank you, thank you.

Finally, to Ian Reyes, who proves that time is elastic, because with him ten years has passed in a blink of an eye. When Heidegger writes about the human experience, he does not write about love. What a terrible mistake. He has missed the most wonderful temporal experience of all.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Because this dissertation references numerous works by Martin Heidegger, and many of the titles are closely similar (for example, *The History of the Concept of Time*, *The Concept of Time* [seminar] *The Concept of Time* [public lecture]), I use the following title abbreviations (presented alphabetically, with the Gesamtausgabe [Complete Works] number and date published/presented. Full publication information listed in the bibliography):

<u>BCAnP</u>	<i>Basic Concepts of Ancient Philosophy</i> (GA 22, 1926)
<u>BCArP</u>	<i>Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy</i> (GA 18, 1924)
<u>BPP</u>	<i>The Basic Problems of Phenomenology</i> (GA 24, 1927)
<u>BT</u>	<i>Being and Time</i> (GA 2, 1927)
<u>CPC</u>	<i>Country Path Conversations</i> (GA 77, 1944-5)
<u>CT1</u>	<i>The Concept of Time</i> , Early manuscript for <i>Being and Time</i> (GA 64, 1924)
<u>CT2</u>	<i>The Concept of Time</i> , Public lecture (GA 64, 1927)
<u>Dialogue</u>	“A Dialogue on Language” (GA 12, 1954)
<u>Dilthey</u>	<i>William Dilthey and the Struggle for a Historical Worldview</i> (GA 80, 1925)
<u>HJC</u>	<i>The Heidegger-Jaspers Correspondence</i> (separate from <i>Gesamtausgabe</i> , letter span from 1920-1963)
<u>HCT</u>	<i>History of the Concept of Time</i> (GA 20, 1925)

<u>IPTP</u>	<i>Introduction to Philosophy: Thinking and Poetizing</i> (GA 50, 1944)
<u>IPR</u>	<i>Introduction to Phenomenological Research</i> (GA 17, 1923)
<u>KNS</u>	<i>The Idea of Philosophy and the Problem of the Worldview</i> (GA 56, War Emergency Semester [KNS] 1919)
<u>LQCEL</u>	<i>Logic as the Question Concerning the Essence of Language</i> (GA 38, 1934)
<u>LQT</u>	<i>Logic: The Question of Truth.</i> (GA 21, 1925)
<u>OEL</u>	<i>On the Essence of Language</i> (GA 85, 1939)
<u>OET</u>	<i>On the Essence of Truth</i> (GA 37, 1933)
<u>OHF</u>	<i>Ontology: The Hermeneutics of Facticity</i> (GA 63, 1923)
<u>PIA</u>	<i>Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle</i> (GA 61, 1921)
<u>PICA</u>	“Phenomenological Interpretations in Connection with Aristotle” (GA 61, 1922)
<u>PIE</u>	<i>Phenomenology of Intuition and Expression</i> (GA 59, 1920)
<u>Poetically</u>	“...Poetically Man Dwells...” (GA 7, 1951)
<u>PS</u>	<i>Plato’s Sophist</i> , (GA 19, 1924)

1.0 INTRODUCTION: WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO *BE* RHETORICAL?

The central, driving question this dissertation seeks to answer is: what does it mean to say that something *is rhetorical*? What does it mean to assert that a discourse, a theory, an image has a rhetorical character, or way of being—a rhetoricity? Note that I do not ask here “what is rhetoric,” but rather what the act of taking up a matter *as rhetorical* entails. Such an assertion lays claim to a certain kind of being of the thing, implies a basic relationship between the observer and thing observed, and is thus initially a *research* question. The implications of the answer, however, reach into the most basic modes of human experience and existence. For the beings that live together through speaking, the world is present in the word, be that presence rhetorical or otherwise. To ask what makes a thing rhetorical, as a subject of inquiry itself, asks how this world is present rhetorically. Initially, generally and for the most part, I argue, the human being encounters the world rhetorically. Thus, the question before us is one of rhetorical theory for the practicing rhetorician, but it is also a question of Being⁴ itself.

The question of the Being of rhetoric unfolds in three directions, following a temporal schema of what projects out toward a thing, what comes before, and how it is present. Most

⁴ The terms Being, being/s, and Dasein are used through the course of this dissertation in the following contexts. First, I follow along with the Heideggerian distinction between ontological Being as the capability-to-be, and ontic beings as particularly extant and present. There is a difference, then, between human Being and human beings. I use Dasein to refer specifically to Heidegger’s conceptualization of Being. Thus I use Being when referring to the ontological act of concerned existence, Dasein when referring to Being as a philosophical concept, and being or beings when referring to specific instances or things. While I do not use Being-There to express Da-Sein’s embeddedness in its world because the phrase is compositionally unwieldy, all uses of Being as act and Dasein as concept presume inextricable ties between Being and its surrounding situation—Being and its There. In quotations where translators have used different formulations (Da-sein, Being-there), I preserve the translator’s style.

immediately, an ontology of rhetoric is a methodological concern for rhetoricians insofar as it guides the thinker's orientation *outward toward* the particular matter of concern. The methodological orientation is underpinned and authorized historically and practically by a hermeneutic concern with interpretation—in how the rhetorical has *already been* taken up and received, which then shapes how “rhetoric” is applied and projected toward the thing. Taken together, then, questions of method are fundamentally about a critical engagement with the act of interpreting itself, in its rootedness in what comes before, and projection toward what is not yet understood. Finally, an ontology of rhetoric asks a theoretical question: how does the rhetorical thing *qua* rhetorical function? We might ask versions of the same question asked by Dilip Gaonkar—is it “rhetoric all the way down” ([41](#))? Is an atom rhetorical? An image? A building? An event? How is rhetoricity *present* in the thing?

I argue that rhetoricity refers to a temporal relationship between speaker, hearer and matter, what Martin Heidegger calls the temporality of everydayness. When we call something rhetorical, we mean that the primary, salient aspect of its being, revealed in a meeting of speaker, hearer and matter, is that the matter of concern is changeable in shared time and thus could be otherwise. It is not by any means revolutionary to say that the study of rhetoric concerns itself with speakers, hearers, matters and how they might be changed. I work through Heidegger's interpretation of Aristotle in order to make a far stronger argument. When we claim that something is rhetorical, *rhetoricity is not located in the claim but in the thing*.⁵ I take rhetorical study

⁵ I use “thing” in the Heideggerian sense. A Heideggerian “thing” is a meeting or gathering place for being in its presence—as physicality, as something in use or for the sake of, as its look and its significance—and, as Graham Harman ([40](#)) points out, in the thing's absence as backgrounded, seeming, as once-being and no more, or to-come and not yet. Bruno Latour similarly uses “thing” to speak to such a collected sense of being: “*Gatherings* is the translation that Heidegger used, to talk about those Things, those sites able to assemble mortals and gods, humans and nonhumans” ([Latour 13](#), emphasis in original). Latour then asks, “[w]hat are the various shapes of the *assemblies* that can make sense of all those *assemblages*” ([14](#), emphases in original)? To a certain extent, this dissertation seeks to explain how rhetorical temporality assembles the thing.

to be directed towards not talk about the thing, or consciousness of the thing, or cognizing of the thing but directed toward the thing, specifically, the way the thing is grasped in time. There are conditions under which an atom *is* rhetorical, or perhaps more pointedly, times in which an atom is present rhetorically. Changeability makes the purchase of shared speaking upon the world insecure. Rhetoricity takes up the thing with an eye toward its escapability, directed at a decision that itself may yet change. Rhetoricity forms the moving joint between world and word. It is time for rhetoricians to begin taking a more confident grasp upon things.

In the following introductory chapter, I lay out the primary ontological question for the dissertation, and its implications for rhetorical study in terms methodology, criticism/interpretation, and theory. The methodological concern: what is capable of being called rhetorical? The critical concern: what are we capable of revealing about the thing by calling it rhetorical? The theoretical concern: what have we claimed about what the rhetorical “thing” is? I then situate my approach to the question of rhetoricity in a period of Martin Heidegger’s early work where he turns to Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* to answer a similar question: what it means to say something is philosophical? After reviewing the existing literature on early Heideggerian philosophy of language and its influence on rhetorical theory, I describe the three contributions this dissertation makes to contemporary rhetorical research. First, this dissertation provides a vital and contemporary reclamation of basic Aristotelian concepts capable of extending beyond traditional speech or textual analysis. Second, this dissertation outlines and substantiates a positive account of rhetorical being that avoids the facile distinction between the fact of the matter and its rhetoric. Third, while I extend the scope of rhetorical being in its positive sense, this dissertation also delimits rhetoricity as a mode of language—though I posit rhetoricity as the original way of Being of speaking, it does not follow that all speaking or all Being is rhetorical.

To conclude the chapter, I outline the larger work to follow, which deals in turn with Heidegger's reappropriation of Aristotelian philosophy of time, the role of time in defining Aristotelian rhetorical ontology, an application of the method in critique of Heidegger's later work, and directions for further rhetorical and philosophical research.

1.1 THE PROBLEM OF THE BEING OF RHETORIC

What does it mean for something to be rhetorical? Addressing rhetoric as an *art* requires either a tacit or explicit ontology of rhetoric, for the same reason our research question becomes an ontological question. Each case concerns how to speak about a matter with others in the proper way towards a particular end. In the realm of rhetoric, however, the central role of otherwiseness in determining the nature of rhetoricity makes the question of propriety much more thorny and a grasp upon the thing more difficult to maintain. How to delimit a practice which itself makes no distinction between what is and what appears to be? What kind of being can also be otherwise?

1.1.1 Speaking of things and matters

A cursory glance at the history and philosophy of rhetoric indicates the way a thinker approaches the proper expression of matters to others reveals the thinker's larger projective ontological stance toward the world—the speaker's comportment toward Being ([Hariman 38-9](#)). The *Dissoi Logoi*, for example, illustrates the problem of rhetorical ontology: the *matters that we call* good and bad, just and unjust, or true and false are not different, but the same, and are distinguished from one another only according to the differing perspectives and temporal situations from and

in which these matters are articulated, brought forth for judgment. Plato builds an entire cosmology from the spoken word. Aristotle seats the rhetorical in the practice of everyday talk. Augustine models his word on the Word of God. Kant accuses rhetoricians confusing a serious business with a free play of the imagination, while Nietzsche celebrates the same act. Kenneth Burke reveals the ephemerality of substance and concretion of the word. With every philosophy of rhetoric comes a system of assumptions regarding how matters are to be taken into expression in a way that preserves the matter's proper being.

And yet, rhetoricians shy from speaking of the matter because of course, the matter is open—there is *no* rhetorical subject matter (what Aristotle calls the *hypokeimenon*) because it can be *any* matter. What *is* rhetorical? Speech, symbol, gesture, act, practice, action, decision, representation—each concept either points toward and away from the world, or re-presents amalgamations and interpretations in consciousness. Where, in these speakings or thinkings, is the matter? Where is the thing of which we speak of, symbolize, gesture toward, act upon, practice with, decide over and represent?

I ask an old question in a new time, both institutionally and intellectually. In the early part of the 21st century, rhetoricians resemble their early sophistic counterparts as wanderers across territories. This is not a disadvantageous position—throughout institutionalized academia we find increased interest in interdisciplinarity, and (at least in word) prize thinkers who have honed the art of wandering afield. Yet these academic territories are delimited by tacit assumptions regarding the being of their matters of study, assumptions that proscribe the proper relationship of the observer to that matter. What perspectives count? What aspects of the matter are relevant for concern?

1.1.2 Methodological and theoretical challenges posed by things that can be otherwise

In taking on the discourses of law, politics, science and art, one must keep the initial ontological question in mind—what it means for something to *be* rhetorical—to then deal with the following methodological concerns: 1) the traditions and ways of seeing the rhetorician brings to bear upon the matter, 2) the determination of what is taken in as “rhetorical” and what is limited out, 3) what the rhetorical enables us to see that might be otherwise inaccessible to other branches of study. These questions themselves are marked by time: what comes before for us, what is taken as present, and what is projected outward?

The answers to such methodological questions respond to institutional structures from within an intellectual milieu. So what of our own time, then? Intellectually, post-structural thinkers emphasize plurality of perspective, the contingency of claim, the priority of everyday practice and, crucially, the importance of appearance. But they have been arguably less successful at explaining *the conditions of the possibility for* and *structures of* that appearance, for fear that any generalized and theoretical explanation will result in calcifying, reifying and essentializing that which is fluid, constructed and multiple. The *otherwise* remains outside and beyond reach, while the *is* remains unspeakable.

The rhetorician’s traditional position outside of rigid disciplinary boundaries presents an advantage insofar as the rhetorician maintains an ambivalent relation to these boundaries—the rhetoricians speaks only of what appears to be the case rather than what is. The limits themselves that constitute the borders between disciplines loosen hold and become matters for concern rather than categorical definitions of the essence of things. We turn back to an old question in order to address two pressing contemporary concerns for rhetorical theory: 1) how to substantiate and engage with a study that remains agnostic regarding appearance/being and is directed toward

that which could be otherwise (the methodological) and 2) how that appearance itself comes into being (the theoretical).

The question of the being of rhetoric, of rhetoricity, parallels Martin Heidegger's own early investigation of philosophy. The inquiries outlined above, regarding methodology and theory, mirror Heidegger's questions for the philosopher and what it means to engage with the world philosophically. Below, I provide a brief summary of the trajectory of Heidegger's early questioning, and its engagement and disengagement from the rhetorical. I then describe this dissertation's methodological approach in light of Heidegger's turn toward and away from rhetoric, and its capacity to address the two main challenges facing rhetorical theory's access to things.

1.2 LOCATING THE RHETORICAL TURN IN METHOD

In order to answer the larger question what it means to *be rhetorical*, I focus on one particular attempt to think about the rhetorical as an ontologically distinct mode of speaking. Throughout the 1920s, philosopher Martin Heidegger struggled to address a similar question: philosophically, what do we mean when we say something is? Heidegger abided by the neo-Kantian command, "back to the things themselves," but was dissatisfied by neo-Kantian accounts for what these things *are*, or put more precisely, *how* these things are and *how we should say* they are. Philosophy, he charged, locks up Being within larger theoretical structures that themselves remain outside of concrete experience—complex logical systems determining truth and falsity, various architectures of consciousness, psychological impulses, gastric juices, a list to which we might today add genetic code, neural composition and eons-old evolutionary

development. Heidegger turned to Aristotle in order to both articulate a philosophy grounded in everyday human experience, and to show how these basic Aristotelian concepts were taken up, reinterpreted and ultimately mangled over the intervening 2500 years of Western thought, as *logos* became logic.

1.2.1 The meeting of Heideggerian phenomenology and Aristotle's *Rhetoric*

Heidegger lays out a challenge to his fellow philosophers in the middle of *Being and Time*: “In the end, philosophical research must for once decide to ask what mode of being belongs to language in general” ([BT 155](#)). For Heidegger in 1927, the answer is clear. All speaking expresses time, or more specifically, *temporality*. Temporality refers to the way in which one encounters and expresses that which has come before, that which is, and that which will be, the three basic possibilities of movement (what Heidegger calls ecstasies) of temporal being. Speaking articulates not bare statements but worlds filled with concerns, fears, goals, memories, wishes and most importantly, other beings. For Heidegger, the word is the window to the soul; in expressing ourselves and hearing others in the context of moving, changing, deciding and making, we show how we ourselves are moved—and, thinking along now with Aristotle, we *are* as we are moved to be. In all of these ways of speaking, we use one word to express the presence and existence of the world: Being. Yet, as the Stranger first observes in Plato's *Sophist*, we think so little about the word Being, what it conceals and reveals, and when we do our former certainty gives way to confusion ([244](#)). Aristotle, too, worries about what we call “being.” As he writes in the *Physics*, being is said in many ways. When we say that language *is*, what way of being do we mean?

Heidegger responds that the mode of being belonging to language in general is not locked up in consciousness or tied to grammatical constructions. The mode of being of language in general lies before us in plain sight, in everyday talk and its expression of temporality. Prior to theories of consciousness or linguistic structures, there is still the basic sort of speaking that one engages in with others about the shared world. This basic mode of being of language is contingent, partial, public, and is not contained in a single word, but in a meeting of speaker, hearer and matter taking place in the flux of everyday life. Heidegger contends that any attempt to understand how human beings constitute the world in language must initiate in the everyday. After issuing the challenge to philosophers to articulate the mode of being of language in general, Heidegger turns to everydayness: “taking as our guideline a fundamental kind of being belonging to discourse, in connection with other phenomena, we shall try to bring the everydayness of Dasein into view in a way that is ontologically more primordial” ([BT 156](#)). We shall do the same.

There is something Heidegger does not say in *Being and Time* regarding the being of everyday speaking. He does *not* say that there exists already a theory of speaking drawn directly from the everyday upon which Heidegger has built is revolutionary phenomenology. No matter. He said it three years prior, in the summer-semester 1924 graduate lecture *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, the text I use as a guide to build an ontology of rhetoric. “*Rhetoric is nothing other than the interpretation of concrete being-there [Dasein], the hermeneutic of being-there itself*” ([BCArP 77](#), emphasis in original). Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*, by drawing a theory of speaking from out of the everyday, shows “how being-there itself speaks” ([BCArP 76](#)). What is of significance for rhetorical ontology is not the word on its own, but how that word has expressed fundamental Being in a world full of times, beings, doings, matters and things.

Heidegger's emphasis on the initial rhetorical nature of language does not last long. In *Being and Time*, the core concepts Heidegger pulls out of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* are still operant (*pathos* as disposition or mood, *ethos* as comportment, *logos* as speaking), but he rarely explicitly acknowledges their source. During his final lecture course before resigning the rectorship of Freiburg University in 1934, Heidegger looks back his challenge to philosophy in *Being and Time* and definitively rejects his prior focus on the *speaking* of everydayness in favor of the silence awaiting speech:

I pass decisively beyond what is said in *Being and Time*, §34, page 164 and following. There, language was indeed brought into an essential relationship with keeping silent; the starting point for a sufficiently originary conception of the essence of language⁶ was also laid down, in opposition to the "philosophy of language" that has reigned until now. And yet I did not see what really has to follow from this starting point: keeping silent is not just an ultimate possibility of discourse, but discourse and language arise from keeping silent. In recent years, I have gone back over these relationships and worked them through. This obviously cannot be explained here ([OET 86-87](#)).

Heidegger hazards an explanation in the lecture directly following his resignation. In *Logic as the Question Concerning the Essence of Language*, Heidegger maintains the basic structure of language worked out in BCAP and continues to forefront the role of temporality in texturing and motivating the human encounter with the world. The temporal origin of language, however, is no longer in the rhetorical speaking of the everyday, but in the poetic speaking of a people:

The essence of language announces itself, not where it is misused and leveled, distorted, and forced into a means of communication, and sunken down into mere expression of a so-called interior. The essence of language essences where it happens as world-forming power, that is, where it in advance performs and brings into jointure the being of beings. The original language is the language of poetry ([LQCEL 140](#)).

The rhetorical has been written out for the final time, no longer the joint between Being and beings. From this point forward, rhetoric's role in Heidegger's work is only as an occasional foil

⁶ The "originary conception of the essence of language" to which Heidegger refers is the speaking of everydayness.

against poetry and philosophy, where its capacity to knit together a public is not world forming but de-forming and fallen—*merely* a means of communication. By the 1944 lecture *Introduction to Philosophy: Thinking and Poetizing*,⁷ the origin of language is fixed wholly on Heidegger's particular configuration of the poetic.

The change in Heidegger's thinking is not a sudden rupture, but rather a gradual rift that opens up along faults already apparent in *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*. Heidegger makes a clear distinction between everydayness and philosophy: "Everydayness leaps over and so back into itself, not philosophically out from itself" ([BCArP 247](#)). Philosophy must account for the everyday in order to fully extricate itself from the uninterrogated assumptions of everyday speaking. Only then can one move from a rhetorical, doxastic speaking that remains steadfastly agnostic regarding the difference between being and appearing to a philosophical speaking that deals with truth, *aletheia*. "Only in contrast to this average way of speaking (λέγειν τι κατά τινας [speaking of matters of concern, or more literally "speaking about things"]), can the ἔξις as ἀληθεύειν [existing as truthful] assert itself" ([BCArP 192](#), bracketed material added). As a philosopher, Heidegger leaps out of the everyday and does not return.

There is a second significance here, one often missed by contemporary critics of Heideggerian philosophy. The prevailing criticism of Heidegger's work is that, in his search for origins, Heidegger oversimplifies the vast differences and indeterminacies of Being. I think this critique misses the mark, because it misunderstands Heidegger's goal. Heidegger's focus, from the 1920s onward, is on determining the proper *ethos* of the philosopher, the comportment one must maintain to think in what he considers a "genuine" or "authentic" manner. This comportment is not exclusive with others—indeed, even the greatest philosophers live their lives

⁷ *Introduction to Philosophy—Thinking and Poetizing* was the final lecture Heidegger gave before the end of World War II, at which point he was banned from teaching for five years as a part of Allied de-Nazification efforts.

generally and for the most part in everydayness. The philosopher and the rhetorician take different stances toward the world as it is brought forth in language.

And yet, Heidegger himself expands what should otherwise be a fairly limited boundary as his thinking develops. In ITP, Heidegger interprets the human being now as the *thinking* rather than *speaking* being (5). He argues that only if all human beings are thinkers—are, in their essence, philosophers—could we be concerned with distinguishing ourselves as thinkers or as those failing to think. All human beings are philosophers, and should use philosophical thinking as a way to enrich concerned everydayness. However, as I argue throughout this dissertation, Heidegger is unable to formulate such an understanding of philosophical *ethos* without first establishing the rhetorical—for it is in the rhetorical that *ethos*, one's basic stance toward the world in speaking to others, is itself taken as a matter of concern. Using Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, Heidegger is first able to see speaking as a *problem* that he will spend the rest of his career attempting to solve.

Written out, the rhetorical yet remains. Later Heidegger is still concerned with the relationship between speaker, hearer and matter, and how they emerge in time. He still attends to how matters come to matter *to us* as we speak to one another, or said another way, “how being becomes appropriate to the human” (ITP 11). We can see the importance of rhetoric in relation to Heidegger's critical interpretive process of *Destruktion*. “Phenomenological Interpretations in Connection with Aristotle: An Indication of the Hermeneutic Situation,” the speculative introductory chapter for Heidegger's unfinished book on Aristotle written in 1922, describes the process of *Destruktion*. Heidegger argues that any theoretical framework must start in a critical mode, calling into question previous assumptions or interpretations. He writes,

Accordingly, insofar as the phenomenological hermeneutics of facticity endeavors, in its interpretation, to play its part in helping the contemporary

situation with the possibility of its being appropriated in a radical manner, doing this by calling attention to concrete categories and allowing them to be given in advance, it sees itself directed to the task of loosening up the reigning state of traditional interpretation today with respect to its hidden motives and its unexpressed tendencies and modes of interpreting so that it can, by way of a deconstructive regress, penetrate into the original motivational sources of these explications. Hermeneutics carries out its tasks only on the path of destruction ([PICA 124](#)).

Two years later, Aristotle's *Rhetoric* provides Heidegger with the hermeneutic stance capable of "loosening up" the everyday in order to reach the origins of philosophy that stand before "philosophy" as such: the conditions of the possibility for philosophy. These conditions are contained in how the matter has come before both speaker and hearer, in how the speaker stands toward the matter and hearer, and in thinking about and articulating the matter with others; the terms are *pathos*, *ethos* and *logos*. *Destruktion* follows the philosophical concept back to its source in rhetorical speaking, loosening traditional interpretation, in order to clear a space from which the philosopher then leaps.

1.2.2 Phenomenology, hermeneutics and method

This dissertation is written from a phenomenological hermeneutic perspective. In establishing the need of an ontology of rhetoric for contemporary rhetorical theory, I isolated two main challenges: first, that rhetoricians require a way to substantiate that which is in appearance, and second, that rhetoricians then need tools for interpreting these appearances. By phenomenological, I mean that my focus is on how positions, decisions and perspectives arise from their fundamental ground in human engagement and undertaking with the world.⁸ In the

⁸ The reader would be right to infer that my phenomenological perspective is distinctly humanist. Because my interest is directed toward speaking as a human act, my interpretation is humanistic. I do not deny that other beings have distinct ways of Being, but these are ways of being we would not be able to express in dissertations. A rock has a Being all its own—and we will never be able to write books about that Being. I am comfortable allowing other beings to Be as they are and speaking of Being as it is for me as a being. I take Heidegger's own later rejection of

terms of the first concern, I use a phenomenological vocabulary to be able to talk about appearance without juxtaposing that appearance against “real being.” For example, to say, as Aristotle does, that rhetoric’s business is with appearance does not necessarily imply that appearance is divorced from being. For the phenomenologist, beings must be approached as they appear, rather than start out with an initial abstraction. In terms of the second concern, I use a hermeneutic perspective to work from appearance back to the way in which that appearance emerges. Again, to say that rhetoric is concerned with appearance is to say that the rhetorical deals with the initial constituent elements of appearing. Thus, I am interested in the way that matters of concern are made present in shared time in *ethos*, *pathos* and *logos*.

I look to the phenomenological tradition to address rhetoricity as appearance. In other words, I begin with the spoken and work back to the situation from which that speaking comes, in order to investigate the conditions and horizons of possibility for the occurrence of the phenomenon. Conditions of possibility opens up possibility as possibility—they provide the initial ground upon which we confront open-endedness in our encounter with the past, present and future. The hermeneutic approach then defines and delimits those possibilities within a fully present and inter-implicated world already underway. The phenomenologist does not isolate a particular characteristic or aspect of a given being but approaches it within its situation (or, in the terms I will use in chapters [three](#), [four](#) and [five](#), the thing within its matter), understanding that it is the situation which lays out the concrete possibilities of action and being—and calls this presence the *phainomenon*, appearance.

We can then think of the hermeneutic moment as that which allows us to begin asking how a thing comes to be as it is without application of a strict external account of causality. In other words, the hermeneutic loosens up the spoken and unspoken assumptions about our world,

humanism ([LOH 239](#)) to be of a piece with his rejection of speaking as the seat of Being.

and demands that those assumptions be explained. Thus, the hermeneutic provides us with a way to speak to the conditions of possibility for a phenomenon. I work from this perspective using two basic animating principles. First, world and word are difficult to untie from one another, but are not reducible to one another. The concern for interpretation is precisely the interrelation—and ultimately the irreconcilable distance—between the word in its world. Were we able to infer a transparent, unproblematic relation between the word and world, interpretation as an activity would be unnecessary. Second, phenomenologically, I take each aspect of the basic state of all speaking to be incapable of isolation into separate parts because each component of the basic phenomenon of speaking are required for the appearance to take place. In rhetorical being, there is no *ethos*, *pathos* or *logos*, no comportment, disposition or speaking, and no future, past or present alone. In response to the curious questioner in the preface, wondering if past, present and future are happening all at once, the answer again is yes. We cannot understand appearance in its full phenomenon if we immediately break the phenomenon into only artificially-isolatable components. One cannot reach into what a thing *is* by first defining it as it is *not*.

I build my particular phenomenological hermeneutic from Heidegger's early interpretations of Aristotle. By early interpretations, I mean those from his initial scholarly writings to the end of his time at Marburg University in 1929, including the publication of *Being and Time* and the immediately preceding lectures. I do not, however, share Heidegger's own position on the ultimate aims of speaking. Heidegger engages with rhetoric in order to renew philosophy. His *ethos*—his comportment or perspective—aims at drawing itself *out* of rhetoric, in both the sense that the rhetorical saying comes first, and that it is left behind. The rhetorical, in other words, is present to Heidegger as something to be overcome, even if only for a moment, in order to get on the way to philosophy. My *ethos* is as one who is concerned with appearances. I

undertake an ontological project not to strengthen my grasp on “what is?” for the sake of itself, but to return better able to articulate “what is here, now?” On this Heidegger and I agree: the rhetorical must return to itself—we differ on whether or not that return is a bad thing. Thus, my reading of Aristotle, at key moments in both the *Physics* (covered in chapter [two](#)), and the *Rhetoric* (covered in chapters [three](#), [four](#) and [five](#)) will diverge from Heidegger’s own, particularly over the role of publicness in both time and speaking. My Aristotle, as a consequence, is certainly Heideggerian-inflected, but it is not to be confused with Heidegger’s Aristotle.

The following dissertation is written by a rhetorician, not a philosopher, and as a rhetorician returns rather than leaping out, it seeks to return Heideggerian thinking to the everyday. Specifically, this dissertation aims to accomplish three main goals: 1) to elucidate the Aristotelian rhetorical foundation of early Heideggerian phenomenology, 2) to rebuild a theory of rhetorical ontology from this foundation that does not abandon the contingent, incomplete, changing and public everyday for an unchanging philosophy of being, and 3) to provide a rhetorical *Destruktion* of Heidegger’s own later philosophy, specifically, the “Dialogue on Language,” in order to reveal the rhetorical ground that precedes even a poetic philosophy of language. In the following section, I will discuss the state of current scholarship on Heidegger and rhetoric and the threefold contribution of this analysis to existing scholarship.

1.3 WHAT REMAINS UNSAID: A REVIEW OF HEIDEGGERIAN RHETORICAL RESEARCH

After Heidegger received international acclaim for *Being and Time*, his subsequent works were quickly taken up and widely published. The record of his earlier thought, however, remained mostly obscure. In the first place, there was less scholarly interest in this formative but not definitive period in Heidegger's philosophical thinking. In the second, until *Being and Time* in 1927, Heidegger published nothing. The vast majority of work from this period was not in the form of proper manuscripts for publication, but rather lecture notes of varying completion that presented a challenge to editors. The official collection of Heidegger's work, the *Gesamtausgabe*, required editors to carefully align Heidegger's notes with extant student transcripts of courses in order to reconstruct the content of the lecture as faithfully as possible.

The editorial problems with *Gesamtausgabe* Band 18, SS 1924: *Grundbegriffe der aristotelischen Philosophie*, were particularly acute. For decades, *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy* existed as little more than rumor evidenced by fragmented, incomplete notes hidden away in various historical collections. The provisional publication title used in the Vittorio Klostermann *Gesamtausgabe* catalogue until 1991 was enough to drive a curious and impatient rhetorician to madness: "Aristotle: Rhetoric" ([BCArP 273](#)),⁹ constantly promised but undelivered. *Gesamtausgabe* editors were struggling with a thorny problem: Heidegger's handwritten manuscripts for the course had a gaping, *Rhetoric*-shaped hole in them.¹⁰ In the

⁹ Reportedly, this is how Karl Löwith, a student in the course at the time, titled his notes for the lecture ([BCArP 273](#)).

¹⁰ To be specific, the manuscript contains varying amounts of material for each section up through §9, is missing §10-22, and picks up again at §23 to the end in §28. The missing sections cover the transition from Heidegger's treatment of the *Nicomachean Ethics* and the entirety of his reading of the *Rhetoric*, picking back up with Heidegger's closing theorization of indigenous concept formation, drawing mainly from the *Categories*. In §§10-12, Heidegger first links conceptuality to the everyday speaking of desirous, political, thinking beings. These sections prepare the way for a pivot to the *Rhetoric* in §§13-22. The missing material contains roughly two-thirds of the

delicate phrasing of the editors afterward, “there is only the beginning and concluding parts [of the lecture manuscript], which together make up something like a third of the whole,” and of the disappearance, “Heidegger himself could not clarify the whereabouts of the missing parts of the manuscript during the preparatory work for the editing of the *Gesamtausgabe*” ([BCArP 273-4](#)).

Having prepared the beginning and end of the manuscript, editors searched for the missing portion to complete the volume, but to no avail. They were left with a gutted work. While efforts to locate the section failed, copies of student transcripts of the lecture eventually resurfaced. When editors compared these transcripts to the original manuscript, however, they found that the spoken lecture differed significantly from the written notes in both content and scope. The editors made a major decision to treat BCarP as a special case—rather than patch the manuscript’s gaping hole with transcribed material, they would compile a master text of the lecture from three mostly-complete student transcripts, and include what was left of Heidegger’s own manuscript as a stand-alone piece in the volume directly following the lecture. The final edition was published in German in 2002, followed by Metcalfe and Tanzer’s English translation in 2010.

We can call *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy* an unauthorized text. In the legal sense, the lecture as it now stands was not the entry that Heidegger oversaw, and if the suspicion that he destroyed the notes himself is true,¹¹ Heidegger’s reading of the *Rhetoric* was not meant

lecture’s content.

¹¹ In *The Young Heidegger: Rumor of the Hidden King*, John van Buren writes that the entire lecture on “*Aristoteles, Rhetorik, II*” was one of several missing manuscripts “apparently destroyed at one time or another by Heidegger’s own hand” ([15](#)). Following Gayatri Spivak’s use of the phrase, van Buren calls the Marburg period a “dangerous supplement” to the Heideggerian corpus that wrests control over interpretation from Heidegger to his readers (and hearers—his students). Why is the supplement so dangerous? The line of argument will be developed throughout chapters [two](#), [three](#) and [four](#), but the upshot is: Heidegger frequently acknowledges changes in his line of thinking. Why in this case would he destroy the evidence and remain silent? I contend that Heidegger’s excision of rhetoric punches a hole in his phenomenological account of language that his later poetic ontology cannot fill. The argumentation in §§ 10-22 isn’t simply wrong—errors can be corrected—it is *dangerous*. The poetic turn is incapable of answering the question animating BCarP: How does the everydayness of thinking, desiring, political beings itself come to be? If, as van Buren (echoing Derrida) says, that supplements to an extent supplant the initial interpretation of a work or corpus, the danger is in unearthing the rhetorical Heidegger.

to see the light of day. It is unauthorized in another, more literal, sense. What one encounters in BCArP is an account *produced by the hearer* that is free to move beyond the scant trace of written notes. The lecture and its manuscript then are positioned in dialogue with one another.

In following review of scholarly literature, I move from the more specific to the more general. I will first discuss the scholarship surrounding the lecture, then Heideggerian-Aristotelian theories of rhetoric, and finally rhetorical ontologies. When dealing with the intersection of rhetoric, Heidegger and Aristotle, I will follow this same sense of dialogue by placing special emphasis on reconsidering these works in the light of *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*. I will begin by looking at the limited scholarship on the lecture itself, then expand to a larger discussion of attempts to articulate a Heideggerian rhetoric from Heidegger's philosophy of language and close with a discussion of the dissertation's contributions to broader formulations of rhetorical ontology while addressing critiques of Heideggerian philosophy.

1.3.1 Heideggerian rhetorics

Commentators approach BCArP in one of two ways: as part of a historical account of Heidegger's intellectual development (either as a particular phase or as the foundation for Heidegger's later work) or in application of early Heideggerian insight to contemporary philosophy and rhetorical theory. In his exhaustive study *The Genesis of Heidegger's Being and Time*, Theodore Kisiel describes BCArP as a sort of crescendo for Heidegger's work on Aristotle, "provid[ing] us with perhaps the best glimpse into how that book on Aristotle [the foundation for *Being and Time*] might have looked" ([Kisiel 292](#)). Arguing that Heidegger approaches Aristotle's practical philosophy as an ontology of human Dasein, Walter Brogan

(188) concludes with a call for further research on BCarP. Brogan's invitation is well-chosen—in *Aristotle and Heidegger: The Twofold of Being*, Brogan argues for further investigation of the lecture in order to better grasp the way in which speaking in time binds together the two-fold of Being and beings. Stuart Elden ([“Reading Logos” 209-210](#); [Speaking Against Number 18](#)) contends that three types of politics emerge from Heidegger's work on language, and describes Heidegger's rhetorical politics as opening up the question of how we are to be-together, but does not answer it rhetorically—instead he turns to language as polemic and poetic to avoid calculative thinking.

In the vein of contemporary rhetorical theory, Allen Scult made an early attempt to build a Heideggerian theory of rhetoric from BCarP, using Walter Bröcker's student transcripts. In “Aristotle's Rhetoric as Ontology: A Heideggerian Reading,” Scult argues that Heidegger's contribution to rhetoric is to direct attention to moodedness, and how “[t]he available means of persuasion’ hold for us the possibilities for action with others in the particular case. Those possibilities are ‘given’ to us with mood, along with the different ways of reading/interpreting our moods in the words of an appropriate response” ([“Ontology” 156](#)). Scult notes that BCarP also holds insight for philosophy as a study of how people knit together the rhetorical fragments around them, and what the process of this knitting-together tells us about Being.

Heidegger's use of everydayness has drawn several rhetorical scholars to his work, though as I argue in chapter two, the ontological implications of everydayness for rhetorical theory remain under-theorized. Expanding upon Eric Ramsey's call, Susan Zickmund ([413-414](#)) turns to the early Heidegger to shift scholarly emphasis away from “authenticity” back toward everydayness as determinative of *Dasein*. Daniel Gross and Ansgar Kemmann's edited collection of essays *Heidegger and Rhetoric* is invaluable, both as a work of intellectual history and as

resource for further study. Otto Pöggeler's contribution to that volume, "Heidegger's Restricted Conception of Rhetoric," contains an exhortation to this project at hand: while Heidegger's contribution to finding a common center of human being is invaluable, his attempt to do so "exhausts neither rhetoric's tradition nor its future possibilities" ([172](#)).

P. Christopher Smith's [The Hermeneutics of Original Argument](#) is a particularly striking example of Heideggerian philosophy enriched by rhetoric's tradition and possibility, and provides a model for this dissertation's hermeneutic approach. Smith follows the Aristotelian, rhetorically-minded Heidegger of BCarP to reveal the rhetorical origins of demonstration and dialectic in Aristotle and Plato, advancing Heidegger's early path. As Smith argues, the turn from speaking about things to endless talking about talking is no new or unique development:

this devolution of argument is in fact not just a modern or postmodern phenomenon; rather, like the 'metaphysics' that condition modernity and, quite possibly, postmodernity too, is something that began with the Greeks' abstraction from original argument and that, in some ways at least, was already consummated by them ([Smith 6](#)).

For Smith, the rhetorical "original argument" is the speaking that deals with contingency and is marked by the temporality of everydayness, which then gives rise to procedural systems of logic. Smith approaches rhetoric, then, with an eye towards its spoken temporality, which Smith then contrasts against the literary temporality of Jacques Derrida's deconstruction.

Finally, in the work of Daniel Gross we can see most clearly a prospective direction for rhetorical ontology. In "Being-Moved: The Pathos of Heidegger's Rhetorical Ontology," Gross formulates a rhetorical ontology of *pathos*—what it means to say that *pathos* is rhetorical—rooted in BCarP. Gross argues that Aristotle's treatment of *pathos* draws Heidegger to understand Dasein not as the Cartesian organizer of the world, but that which is moved in the world through concerned engagement. As Gross argues, Heidegger "*thus relocates rhetoric at*

the heart of his fundamental ontology” ([“Being-Moved” 4](#)). Gross then puts this understanding to work in his book *The Secret History of Emotion*. Gross begins by laying out an Aristotelian conception of *pathos* as a social articulation of a network of concrete and variable commitments of people to one another and their surrounding world ([Secret History 41](#)). Gross uses the Aristotelian (by way of Heidegger) conception to then map out the networks of power and investment manifest in different post-Aristotelian theorizations of emotion.

I want to note how Gross’s use of the early Heidegger provides a crucial corrective to later Heideggerian conceptions of moodedness. In the later years, Heidegger is interested only in Dasein’s ownmost potential, as separate from its being in the everyday. Thus the discussion of mood becomes less and less connected to the social and material. By maintaining the vital connection between Aristotle’s rhetoric and Heidegger’s phenomenology, Gross is able to show how our expression of being-moved illuminates a concrete and historical social order, where some find sympathy and others scorn.

Prior to the widespread availability of *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, rhetorical scholars drew together theoretical insights from Heidegger’s expanded body of work, with an emphasis most strongly on the prominent role of *pathos* in *Being and Time*. Lenore Langsdorf, for example, reconfigures the post-structural sense of self from within rhetorical dwelling, as both constituted by and constituting engaged social practice ([“Words of Others” 43-44](#); [“Why Phenomenology?” 7](#)).

The work of Michael Hyde and Craig R. Smith has arguably contributed the most to build a Heideggerian rhetorical vocabulary. I want to take time here to illustrate the possible applications of a Heideggerian rhetoric, but also to flag an important distinction between my interpretation and that of Hyde and Smith. Hyde and Smith’s “Hermeneutics and Rhetoric: A

Seen but Unobserved Relationship” may be the earliest comprehensive articulation of a Heideggerian rhetorical theory. Hyde and Smith suggest that rhetoric lies at the source of all acts of interpretation (including one’s self-interpretation), locating “rhetoric at a crucial place in ontology and epistemology. Once this placement is accepted, rhetoric becomes an existential structure, a defining characteristic, and a determinant of the individual’s consciousness” (363). Hyde has since brought this rhetorical-hermeneutic perspective to bear on ethical action, asking how one comes to acknowledge or disacknowledge the presence of the Other ([Lifegiving Gift](#) xiv; [“Rhetorically We Dwell”](#) xx).

Hyde’s 1991 essay (later expanded in book length) “The Call of Conscience: Heidegger and the Question of Rhetoric” addresses the disjoint between Heidegger’s early and late work on language and highlights the same problems I will discuss in this dissertation (particularly in chapter [six](#)). Namely, Hyde shows how Heidegger’s later emphasis upon the speaking or saying of language no longer engages with the pressing concern of everydayness [“Call of Conscience”](#) 385). Hyde understands that the differing modes of language (poetic and rhetorical) grasp Being in different ways. For Hyde, then, the call of conscience joins the recognition of Dasein’s own ability to Be with the particular struggles of everyday Being ([Call of Conscience \[book\]](#) 26). The deconstructive, opening capacity of poetic conscience meets the reconstructive, practical but circumscribed capacity of rhetoric.

Hyde’s tracing of rhetoricity throughout *Being and Time* holds up very well in the light of BCAP, particularly in its treatment of *pathos*. Hyde’s attention is drawn to *pathos*, understandably given that Heidegger is most explicit about the concept’s origin in Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*, and to *ethos* as a question of consciousness of/conscientiousness towards others in the

world.¹² The influence of rhetorical *ethos* as comportment rather than consciousness and *logos* as standing in for the matter are more obscure. Like Hyde, I am concerned about possible difficulties reconciling the Being of a thing taken poetically and a thing taken rhetorically (we may also add to this list a thing taken religiously). As previously discussed, Heidegger's thinking on language undergoes a slow but decisive change throughout his career. A synthesis would graft the early rhetorical Heidegger, who presumes that the essence of human being is in speaking, onto the later poetic Heidegger, who contends that the same essence is in silence.

Hyde concludes the essay "The Call of Conscience" with a recognition that, even charitably interpreted, Heidegger's later philosophy offers no clear standing for Others (390). My concern is slightly different. I think that the Being of *things* taken rhetorically and the Being of *things* taken poetically are substantially different in their Being. Here is the rub. Hyde has the right of both the similarities and differences between rhetorical and poetic speaking, but not what they speak *of*. It is not so much the orientation toward the Other (or Others) that I find problematic as it is the orientation toward the *thing* (and through engagement with the thing, the extent to which one *recognizes a claim of the Other upon the thing in shared time*). In other words, *who* matters depends on *the matter* at hand. Heidegger maintains the implicitly rhetorical structure of speaking throughout his work, while swapping rhetoric out for poetry as the initial *origin* of language, that out of which the thing comes to be in speaking. It is a substitution rather than an addition. This is why Hyde sees the poetic impulse as initializing (it is...we are...), and rhetoric as returning (thus, we do...), when in BCARP rhetoric is positioned as *initializing and then returning* to itself. Seating Being in a place outside of the everyday, beyond our region of concern, may become possible as a consequence of developing other ways of orienting toward

¹² In *Being and Time*'s discussion of the *pathe*, Heidegger argues that the *Rhetoric* "provides the first systematic hermeneutic of everydayness" (130), partially echoing "the hermeneutic of Being-there itself" in BCARP (75).

the world in order to ask questions that the everyday cannot answer. God, for example, is the answer to a question, perhaps *the* question of why Being and not nothing. The question arises in the course of the everyday struggle with existence, when this struggle itself becomes the concern for Being. Yet still, even here, the question itself initiates from within the everyday before reaching outward beyond it. The most transcendent of answers beyond the human are still answers to questions of human life. It is the rhetorical, not the poetic, which first asks questions of is-ness when it addresses that which can be otherwise.

Surely, however, Hyde has full right to do what I myself am doing in this dissertation, which is to reconstruct a rhetorical theory using Heideggerian resources while straying from (and occasionally confronting) the Official Line. In addition, I think that a productive synthesis between poetic, rhetorical and philosophical speaking is certainly *possible*. The question is what significance does the ontological difference between poetic (and to this, we can add philosophical and scientific) ways of taking things in speaking have upon who then may claim such a thing, and how the claimants may do so.

Calvin O. Schrag has his finger on the problem. The rhetorical and the poetic have different temporalities—they take up and manifest Being in different ways according to differing temporal orientations to the matter and hearer. The problem with the poetic orientation toward time is that matters does not press upon one and time is not, from its beginning, shared. What is present in the now, in other words, is *differently* for rhetorical and poetic speaking. Poetic time is one's own, rhetorical time is not entirely one's own—others lay claim to the same now. The latter is crucial for any form of responsive politics, ethics or justice ([Schrag, *Resources of Rationality* 156](#)). The rhetorical must *precede* poetic reconfiguration for there to be any about-which for one to care. And the poetic cannot turn back to the rhetorical without becoming-

otherwise than it is, without opening the secured and protected word up to change and challenge. Next, a far simpler argument: we cannot define the poetic as purely projective or the rhetorical as purely reconstructive, because the rhetorical is capable of projecting, and the poetic is capable of reconstructing. Temporal ecstasies lie fully open to each, but that which lies in them does so differently.

Hyde is right to say that speaking should be tied to a “how” of being. This dissertation reconfigures that tie, with an emphasis not on the relation between speaker and hearer, but upon both to the things that bring speaker and hearer into being *as speaking, as hearing about things*. Both my reading of the *Rhetoric* in chapters [three](#), [four](#) and [five](#), and my critical interpretation of Heidegger’s “Dialogue on Language” in chapter [six](#) will deal with the relationship between rhetorical, philosophical, scientific, and poetic speaking,¹³ and between an ontology grounded on speaking and one grounded on silence. For now, it is enough to say that the figurations of poetic speech (from reconfiguration to disfiguration) grow, like philosophical speech, from the ground of rhetoric.

The directions opened by Smith, Hyde and other Heideggerian rhetoricians could be strengthened with an addition of a discussion of things and *how* they matter in time. Let me give an example: In the 1991 piece “Rethinking ‘The Public’: The Role of Emotion in Being-with-Others,” Smith and Hyde argue (I believe rightly) that Aristotle’s conception of *pathos* resists the Heideggerian tendency to relegate publicness to an inchoate mass. As I will illustrate in chapter

¹³ The differences between rhetorical, philosophical and poetic speaking will be explained in greater detail in the work that follows, but for the time being the following distinctions should suffice. As I have argued, Heidegger merges the poetic and philosophical later in his career, but temporally speaking we can draw a line between the two. First, there are differences in the way that temporality of the claim (to what extent it holds), and second the expression of being. For the philosophical (and its later variant, the scientific), the claim is non-contradictory and being unchanging. For the poetic, the claim is open and the being resolved in disclosure. For the rhetorical, the claim is changing and the being possibly otherwise. These modes of speaking are not exhaustive of the different ways of relating to things in language (the religious, for example, would be another mode), but are the modes of language most directly compared to the rhetorical in both Aristotle and Heidegger’s work.

four in agreement with Smith and Hyde, the *pathe* form a network of attachments both temporally and proximally as a public region of concern. These networks, however, shift with the *matter* of concern. Smith and Hyde use as an example Ronald Reagan's shaming of the Soviet Union over the shooting-down of Korean Airliner Flight 007. Using an audiotape as evidence to prove Soviet denials of involvement false, Smith and Hyde argue that Reagan moved "his listeners further along a continuum from indifference to outrage and thereby rally public support for what he believed was the proper choice regarding defense spending" (455). What particular constellation of the public would be moved by such an event and toward what end? Why would such a public be moved to include a downed Korean airliner in their region of concern? To determine *how* a public has constituted and *who* is counted within the public, we need to first see *what* the public has concerned itself with. In other words, *who* matters depends on *who* the matter matters to, thus we are drawn back to a temporal ontological question: *what* is the matter and *how* does it matter?

Other rhetoricians follow Heidegger's reinterpretation of traditionally Aristotelian concepts, for example, *phronesis* or practical judgment—a know-how of change, and the mode of action twinned to rhetorical temporality. Thomas B. Farrell investigates the ontology of rhetoric in relation to *phainomena*, as that which brings the world to light in specific ways, and guides our attempts to take counsel with one another (20). Responding to *Norms of Rhetorical Culture*, Daniel L. Smith (79) suggests that Heidegger seats the positive, constructive power of being-with-others in the everyday inventive responses to the unexpected world guided by *phronesis*, which are not guided by rule, but occur precisely where the rule has broken, calling us to care. Mailloux ("[Rhetorical Hermeneutics Once Again](#)," 458-459) argues that the projective dealing of *phronesis* is what Heidegger ultimately means by "conscience." Finally, Schrag

([Communicative Praxis 214](#); [Resources of Rationality 146](#)) suggests that, in providing the materials for situated praxis—for engagement in *phronesis*—rhetoric provides the reconstructive space for subjectivity and knowledge, acting as counterpart to Heideggerian deconstruction and *poesis*.

1.3.2 Heideggerian dissents

Other scholars reapproach Heidegger, but with qualifications. John Durham Peters acknowledges that Heidegger provides an important contribution to the study of communication as the articulation of Being in the world, but suggests that this contribution still lacks “the full palette of colors” ([21](#)). Heidegger is too concerned with the impossibility of fully-understood and transparent communication to care much for its innumerable small successes. Schrag warns that poetic dwelling cannot account for the entirety of what he calls the “space of communicative praxis” that is contoured by our everyday existence ([Communicative Praxis 211](#)). Comparing Heidegger and Kenneth Burke, Samuel Southwell ([42](#)) finds much in the way of similarity, but he also argues that there is a wide gulf between Burke and the later Heidegger, particularly over whether or not one might understand language from within language. The later Heidegger, concerned with what language *does not* say, turns to silence over speaking.

In a more severe dissent, J. E. McGuire and Barbara Tuchanska argue that Heidegger’s concern with *poesis* over *praxis* overemphasizes individual action and creation at the cost of the social—that, indeed, “in Heidegger’s ontology there is no autonomous place for the sociocultural” at all, and is unfit for interpreting institutionalized socio-cultural discourses, such as those of science ([70-1](#)). Victor Vitanza charges that Heidegger’s concern with “it is” drives him toward endless “negative essentializing” ([188](#)). Speaking can never be fully authentic

because every articulation of “it is” is a simultaneous declaration of what “is not.” Gregory Desilet (10) suggests that this blindness to the sociocultural and emphasis on purity of “the is” versus “the is not” is driven by the implicit presumption that a transcendent Being lies beyond beings. Speaking directly to the distinction between conceptual and poetic modes of language, Timothy Crusius (14) contends that Heidegger’s search for the origin of language (*contra* Burke) led him to misunderstand the importance of conceptual thought for practical reason and coping in the world.¹⁴ Heidegger’s contributions to rhetoric, then, continue to be actively contested.¹⁵

The above critiques are of a piece: the everyday, which we share in with others, is missing from Heidegger’s later understanding of language as truthful or *alethetic*. This is true. Heidegger does indeed leap out of the everyday, where small successes make up our immediate experience of the world, into the philosophical. The everyday, however, is not missing in the sense of being forgotten, but rather of being abandoned. The question remains how the leap from rhetorical to philosophical/poetic can be possible in the first place, and here I argue the rhetorical plays a key role in grounding that leap.

The dissents by and large, then, focus on the under-theorizing, absence or plain rejection of everydayness, which I believe is both valid and indicative of a deeply problematic implication for Heideggerian rhetoric. Heidegger is profoundly uncomfortable with the shared, rushed and partial publicness of everydayness and as a result, his understanding of *Dasein*—which acknowledges the essential role of publicness in constituting Being in time—nevertheless has an

¹⁴ Crusius regularly specifies that his critique aims at the later Heidegger, though he does not discuss much of the early Heidegger and how that phase of work might be immune to Crusius’ critique. In response, I would say that Heidegger’s preliminary design of “indigenous conceptuality” speaks directly to the relation between concept formation and the practical decision-making of *phronesis*. Thus, the arguments in this dissertation function as a “friendly amendment” to Crusius’ position.

¹⁵ Surveying critiques of Heidegger in a rhetorical vein reveals several contradictory interpretations: whether, for example, Heidegger is a transcendentalist per Desilet, an anti-transcendentalist per Hariman, afflicted by negativity per Vitanza, or offering “an opening to a better world,” a skeptical deconstructionist per Crusius, or a hermeneutic reconstructionist per Hyde and Smith. The answer has to be predicated on *which* Heidegger one reads, and *how* one reads him.

airless, ascetic quality. If we take as our guide the later Heidegger, we find a philosophy of language which takes the everyday as a graveyard rather than origin of genuine thinking, and in which our relationships with others may be mediated by dialogue but play very little social or cultural role in positively strengthening or guiding Dasein.

Vitanza's critique is especially pointed. Heidegger's *alethetic* sense of truth, the proper expression of Being, defines being as what *remains as it is*, what stands resolved amidst change. It is a philosophical posture aiming at preserving, saving, and maintaining, where that which changes in time becomes labeled as less-than-being, as inauthentic being. As I will discuss, this philosophical posture—a comportment, in Heideggerian terms, or *ethos* in Aristotelian—still arises from an initial rhetorical posture. In short, Heidegger's juxtaposition between everydayness and genuine speaking creates a faulty foundation for rhetorical theory. In BCARP, however, we see a different articulation of the relation between speaking and being, in which the conditions for the possibility of genuine speaking arise from within the everyday. Any speaking of “what is” begins from the presumption that it could be otherwise. Prior to *aletheia*, there is *doxa*.

1.4 CONTRIBUTIONS TO RHETORICAL THEORY

By using as a guide Heidegger's taking up of Aristotle and later turn away to ask the question what it means to say that something is rhetorical, this dissertation offers three contributions to contemporary rhetorical theory, the first dealing with interpretation, the second with theory and the third with criticism. The question—what does it mean to say that something is rhetorical—is one of interpretation, and we can understand interpretation temporally, in terms of before and

after drawn together in a now. What lies before in interpretation? Interpretation bears history. The first contribution, then, lies in showing how Aristotelian and Heideggerian concepts draw from concrete and factual life, and extend beyond simple operational definitions that constrain what was, is or could be. This dissertation provides a reinterpretation and appropriation of key Aristotelian rhetorical concepts by way of a Heideggerian phenomenological hermeneutic that forefronts the role of temporality. Second, all interpretation projects outward as theory (*theoria* after all, means to look outward and observe), that is, interpretation provides a location from which to look beyond, toward a particular end. Theoretically, then, this dissertation constructs an alternative rhetorical ontology from Aristotelian-Heideggerian grounds that holds on to the public and everyday, and clarifies how rhetorical research relates to the objects of its study. Gathering together what has come before and what lies ahead, interpretation establishes what is here, now. Thus, in the final critical phase, this dissertation distinguishes between temporal modes of language that express the world—which always includes one’s own being, as well as that of others—differently. The dissertation makes the case for a vital, contemporary Heideggerian-inflected Aristotelian ontology of rhetoric.

The three facets of interpretation, theory and criticism address three pressing problems for rhetorical theory: first, how to appropriate ancient theoretical concepts for contemporary study, second, how to approach claiming a thing as rhetorical (what I call below the “rhetoric of” problem) and third, how to circumscribe rather than suborn the study of rhetoric within the larger expanse of language or symbolic representation. I seek to make the case that the rhetorical mode of being is the origin of speaking, but also provides the conditions of possibility for that speaking to change, to give birth to the philosophical and poetic alike. To call the rhetorical *original* does not mean that all is rhetorical. Temporally speaking, things can be taken up in different ways,

and the philosophical and poetic modes are distinct from the rhetorical. If rhetoric is everywhere, it is nowhere. An acknowledgement of the rhetorical origin of language cannot merely trace out the contours of all language, but must articulate the conditions in which a thing can be properly called rhetorical.

By documenting the crucial role that Aristotle's *Rhetoric* plays in Heidegger's early philosophy, as well as in his move away from Aristotle beginning in *Being and Time* and continuing through the *Kehre*, or turn, into his later work,¹⁶ this dissertation directly and practically deals with the problem of building contemporary theory drawn from classical concepts. Second, the dissertation builds on this early foundation to present a positive account of rhetorical ontology. By a positive account of rhetorical ontology, I mean one that does not define rhetoricity by negation, as though it were just the minor key of being. Instead, using an analysis of speaking in time, I argue that approaching being as being-possibly-otherwise grounds speaking in the world of which it speaks. To call something rhetorical is not to make a claim about a claim, but a claim to a thing that is crucially, definitively present—even in its partiality, absence or distance. Third, by presenting a positive rhetorical ontology, the dissertation approaches rhetoricity in its critical mode—as a hermeneutic that returns the conceptual to its ground in everyday speaking, in which truth is not guaranteed and exists not in word, but in the confluence of speaker, hearer and matter. For Heidegger in 1924, the *Rhetoric* provides a

¹⁶ The *Kehre* is the term used by Heideggerian scholars to identify an interstitial period in Heidegger's work that occurs roughly in the 1930s, where Heidegger shifts into a new direction of thought. What exactly constitutes the turn and when it occurs, however, is heavily debated. Elden argues for a shift from *Being and Time* to *Time and Being*, with excursions through the pre-Socratics, Holderlin and Nietzsche ([Mapping the Present 165](#)). John D. Caputo contends that the turn is from facticity back to Platonic *eidos*, and calls for a new *kehre* back to facticity ([Demythologizing Heidegger 164](#)), a movement in which this dissertation partakes. Gadamer thinks the *Kehre* is not so much a departure as a reconfiguration of prior thought that consistently seeks to answer the same persistent question ([Heidegger's Ways 21](#)). We will see Heidegger's own characterization of the change in his work in chapter [six's](#) investigation of the Dialogue. In this dissertation, I take the position that Heidegger's explicit rejection of speaking as the foundation of Being is a critical component of the *Kehre*. By rejecting speaking, Heidegger functionally voids the rhetorical ground of Dasein and ends what I refer to as his early period. I use as a rough marker for this moment Heidegger's renunciation of section 34 of *Being and Time* in the winter 1934 lecture "On the Essence of Truth."

vocabulary and set of basic structures for speaking from which he can “clear out” philosophy and revitalize ancient thinking. Heidegger wishes to begin with simple philosophical claims, and then move back to the conditions under which the claim first arises. The movement of *Destruktion* moves in essence from the philosophical to the rhetorical.

1.4.1 Heideggerianism and Aristotelianism

Why is Heidegger’s reading of Aristotle, an almost 90-year-old quickly abandoned foray for the philosopher, relevant to contemporary rhetorical theory? The persistent influence of Aristotle (and Aristotelianism) on the field of rhetoric is both a source of concern and hope for rhetorical theorists. The concern arises from a fear that, as rhetorical practice moves further away from the Athenian *agora*, out of date Aristotelian theory at best constrains and at worst deforms the objects it seeks to study. The hope, on the other hand, is that core Aristotelian concepts have persisted because they both draw helpful distinctions and maintain a flexibility before the situation to be taken up in many ways. In the 1920’s Heidegger attempted to explain how to interpret Aristotle for the contemporary intellectual moment, while keeping in view the concrete and factual historical situation in which it was first formulated. By investigating Heidegger’s initial embrace of Aristotle and subsequent distancing, we can address the larger issue of Aristotle’s intellectual prominence for the study of rhetoric—both in concern and hope. The question is not whither Aristotle and Heidegger, but Aristotle and Heidegger *how*?

Interpretations bear history, and interpretations of Aristotle bear with them Aristotelianism. Heidegger turns to the *Rhetoric* to correct what he sees as a pervasive misreading of Aristotelian *logos*—namely, the focus on *logos* alone, rather than its emergence in speaking with one another about matters. This is how we move from talking about things, to

talking about talk, to defining the thing by talk about the thing. Reading Aristotle can be a queasy affair, as translators concerned with maintaining each word's full fidelity across the Aristotelian corpus pile amalgamated concepts upon one another, a Romanism here, a Medievalism there, a Victorianism beside. As Gross has illustrated, the way one takes something so foundational as *pathos* is textured by a web of concerns and commitments given in that particular period ([Secret History 34](#)). Reading Aristotelian work presents as much a survey of historical and philosophical ideals and anxieties as they do Aristotle or Greek speaking.

We do not want to throw out Aristotelianism as a whole. Instead, we want to understand how and why certain strains of Aristotelianism remain active in shaping interpretations of rhetoricity. Why does the split between actor-practice and speaker-hearer continually arise? How has the study of rhetoric taken *speaking* rather than the *spoken-of* as the most legitimate object of analysis? Why do we worry about speaking and hearing, but dare not speak of matters? Following Heidegger, we can see how the focus on *logos* alone then shaped a crucial portion of twentieth century philosophy. As Steven Mailloux notes in agreement with Edward P. J. Corbett, a great deal of modern thought either resembles or owes an explicit debt to Aristotle, and the ways in which a thinker invokes Aristotle traces out the contours of that contemporary moment ([176](#)). In our own, the border between the material and the symbolic is blurred and contested. Heidegger looks to Aristotle to describe the purchase of the word upon the material for the sake of philosophical research. By investigating how and why Heidegger takes this intersection of world and word as problematic, but keeping our attention firmly upon the rhetorical, this dissertation returns to the point of intersection and gives a different answer in order to respond to contemporary concerns over the realm and reach of rhetoricity.

If Aristotle must be separated from Aristotelianism, Heidegger must be separated from Heideggerianism. I argue that the *Rhetoric* provided Heidegger with a crucial piece of the intellectual architecture for *Being and Time*, specifically the point of intersection between the concrete-factual and symbolic: *Sachlichkeit*, the fidelity to things, where the thing and its interpretation meet in “a willingness to wrestle with the issues and with oneself in an interpretation that acknowledges its own temporality” ([Polt, *Emergency of Being* 11](#)). Heidegger’s early lectures had already drawn the conclusion that any account for shared human being had to deal with time as experienced in the everyday, and *Being and Time* elaborates upon the temporality of everydayness, though everydayness is positioned as that from which philosophy must break. Nevertheless, there are traces of the *Rhetoric* throughout *Being and Time*. Dasein’s moodedness, the way it finds itself already disposed toward the world, is an elaboration of *pathos*. Dasein’s cultivated comportment toward the world has its roots in *ethos*. Finally, *logos* in its rhetorical sense, as a general act of speaking rather than a particular system of reason, grounds all being in expression. As explained earlier, the origins of these concepts are contained in an unauthorized text, a Heidegger never meant for public eyes. To draw out a Heideggerian rhetoric, we must read Heidegger against himself, so that we can see how his own *logos*, that later grounds his thought, remains unsettled.

The relevance of Heidegger’s work for today’s rhetorician is perhaps not so clear as that of Aristotle above, but the cleavage between the early and late Heidegger marks a place to begin reevaluating the literary sense of rhetoricity in the dusk of post-structural thought. Following P. Christopher Smith, I argue that the rejection of speaking in favor of silence misleads literary post-structuralism—the turning from speaking to a broken-off text, or signifiers nested in one another like matryoshkas. For Heidegger, thinking both philosophically and poetically, Dasein is

shaped in its decision to confront the world truthfully in search (or, more precisely in *awaiting*) of *aletheia*. Rhetoricity, however, remains as that which sets up the decision put before Dasein. Rhetoricity thus stands before the text or before the word has broken off, but not in silence—it brings forth a decision that is given to others rather than presented to Dasein’s own self, and is given in speaking with one another. As argued above, and further in chapters [two](#) and [three](#), deconstruction’s predecessor *Destruktion* seeks precisely this prior moment and the movement toward the point of decision, beyond and before the concretion of decision itself.

If I am criticizing Heidegger’s ultimate philosophy of language and rejection of rhetoric, what is the good of engaging in an Aristotelian-Heideggerian interpretation? Does this approach not simply add bad to good? The goal of this analysis is to augment Aristotelian concepts passed down through centuries more or less smoothly, used to define and delimit *what* rhetoric is, in such a way that we see instead *how* the rhetorical is. We want to know about the concrete, factual being—the *sachlichkeit* or *thingliness*—of things taken to be rhetorical. We want to know if an atom *is* rhetorical. Heidegger himself addresses the question of engaging with things rather than recycled talk about things at the beginning of *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy* in a directly relevant way for contemporary rhetoricians struggling to articulate new perspectives with old terms. Can we engage with Aristotle without being burdened by the legacy of Aristotelianism? Can we revive the things of which Aristotle spoke from out of the centuries of talk *about* Aristotle?

1.4.2 The fate of Aristotelian research

There are twin tendencies for Aristotelian definitions of being and the relation to language. One tendency takes the matter as it shows itself in concrete, everyday occurrence: how it is for us,

how it is used. The second is to then use expression as the basis of definition of that which is, as a term or concept. So, in the first case, *what is* is drawn from *what a thing is for us*: a house is a place in which we dwell. In the second case, *what is* is defined by a prior formal definition: a house is legally defined as “real property,” falling under the category of buildings affixed to the land. In one direction, the definition of *what is* comes from our mode of access, in the other, a particular mode of access is used to define *what is*.

The question, what do we mean when we say that something is rhetorical, is a conceptual question (a mode of access used to define what is), but a concept gains its power to define by way of interpretation that secures the conditions under which the concept may arise and take hold (defining what is according to our mode of access). Temporally speaking, as I argue in chapter [three](#), the concept arises from what shared speaking claims holds generally and for the most part. Conceptual definition points back to a matter through how we have said that it is. The question, what it means to say that something is rhetorical, is one of access to the matter at hand.

To call something rhetorical is to define it, to make a claim as to its being, and this claim can be made in one of two ways. First, we can define the matter itself as capable of being taken rhetorically, of how it is to us in speaking. Second, we can define rhetoric as conceptually adjacent to the matter itself, as the matter *and its* rhetoric. The former must be capable of articulating how its definition ([x] is defined as rhetorical) is appropriate to, and reveals something significant about, thing within its matter at hand. The latter must define rhetoric as having a being separate from the matter, tacitly accepting and operationalizing the “primal ontological” distinction between being and non-being without explicitly meting out that distinction. It is a descendent of Aristotelianism.

Heidegger prefaces his investigation of Aristotle with a curious line of reasoning in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* regarding the relation between logical definition and that which logical definition actually defines. I will return to this observation in key moments of the articulation of rhetorical Being. On the one hand, a conceptual definition ("the rhetorical is...") should be drawn out of our interactions with the thing, but on the other, the procedure of defining something is limited to comparing a species to a genus, a particular to a predetermined general category ("X is rhetorical"):

For Kant's position, the two characteristic aspects are (1) that the definitio is discussed in the doctrine of method and (2) that he determines the basic procedure of the definitio in such a way that it *does not come into play for genuine definition*¹⁷ ([BCArP 10](#)).

In the Kantian treatment of definition, Heidegger contends, "lies the fate of Aristotelian research" ([BCArP 11](#)) in both its positive and negative directions. Kant realizes that logic is something more than a system of identification, categorization and verification. The precision of our speaking as conceptual definition is judged by the definition's capacity to show what the particular thing, partaking of a general tendency, is. The value of a system of logic is determined by the extent to which a general category tells us something vital and essential about the particular matter at hand. Conceptual definitions must be drawn from the movement of life. Definition as an act, then, does not cease at labeling what a thing is, but moves beyond to show what that thing is for. The business of definition is a methodological business, guiding *how we say something is*.

Yet the structure of definition then becomes dictated by an external logic of genus and species built adjacent to the matter itself. Kant's *definitio* cannot fulfill its assigned task. What

¹⁷ Heidegger retains the Latin term *definitio* to distinguish between Kant's particular treatment of definition, and Heidegger's own counter-interpretation. Genuine definition, for Heidegger, means the capacity of the conceptual definition to show what the thing at hand *is for*.

the matter is becomes defined by way of comparison with what it is not, determined in relation to a system of organization and articulation. The rules of procedure determine our articulation, how we can say that it is. The logical procedure of definition renders the concept unable to fulfill its purpose of bringing matter to word. Heidegger asks a theoretical and historical question: “How does it come about that a definitio, which is genuine *knowledge of the matter*, become a matter of *logical perfection*?” ([BCArP 11](#), emphasis in original).

1.4.3 The “rhetoric-of” problem

We see a similar dynamic at work in that I will call the “rhetoric of” problem, whereby the rhetorical is simultaneously positioned as that out of which we access the matter at hand and yet is defined by its adjacency to the matter. It is worthwhile to distinguish between the “rhetoric of” problem as taken in everyday talk, and the “rhetoric of” problem in academic circles. “Rhetoric” is interpreted differently in each case, but rhetoric’s positioning vis-à-vis the world it expresses remains the same.

In everyday talk, discussion of the “rhetoric of” illustrates both the promise of the Kantian/Aristotelian interpretation and its downfall. In the everyday sense, rhetoric is positioned over and above reality (for example, in the headline: “The Rhetoric of Human Security and its Reality”). The rhetorical is acknowledged as guiding one’s access to the matter, but it is then juxtaposed against and defined by that which it is not—the rhetorical appears only as its mode of *otherwise than being*, as “seeming” in the sense of looking-so but not being-so. The “rhetoric of” move both draws attention to the role of language in our understanding, but also cleaves our talk about talk from the matter itself. “The rhetoric of” emphasizes awareness that our access to the matter at hand is shaped and mediated by language. Here we have the positive methodological

awareness—the matter can be presented in such a way that it changes what we understand the matter to be, and what it is for. Yet, in the second move, “the reality,” we have a definition of the matter contrasted against the rhetorical that is either explicitly or implicitly privileged. Having first addressed its rhetorical being, one then denies the legitimacy of that being and categorizes the matter differently.

In scholarly circles, “the rhetoric of” does not presume that the rhetorical is self-evidently subordinate to the real matter, but rhetoric’s relationship to that which it is “of” remains ambiguous. The same basic dynamic lays itself out in rhetorical scholarship in two ways. In the first, the rhetorical is positioned as adjunct to the matter, in a slightly more sophisticated variant of the everyday usage. There is the thing, and then there is talk about the thing, and rhetorical research properly directs itself toward the talk about the thing. “The rhetoric of” indicates a separate being, in particular, the being of the word. *Logos* triumphs. In the second variant, which I consider the more nuanced, rhetoricity of a matter shapes one’s encounter with the matter. The stuff of the world is thus organized in a sort of cognitive/consciousness/conscientiousness rhetorical matrix. Here, understanding and its handmaiden speaking are presented as mediatory between the twin poles of word and world, each still maintaining their own ground with a bridge of consciousness or cognition tossed in between—with “of” still doing the bridging. Sometimes this move is made with reference to “representations,” others with “practical judgment.” In either case, the material and sensory world is reconstructed internally by acts of conscious understanding, and the reconstruction is then judged in its proper accordance with “reality.”

In either case, the relation of rhetoricity to the matter at hand is not explicitly fleshed out. There is a persistent ambiguity as to what work this “of” is doing. The rhetorical becomes either a product of the matter (the matter and its rhetoric), or the matter a product of the rhetorical (a

rhetoric of matter). In both cases, the status of *logos* remains both undisputed and under-theorized.

1.4.4 A positive ontology of rhetoric

The challenge becomes articulating the being of rhetoric conceptually, while maintaining the orientation of rhetoricity toward the preconceptual. In other words, can we give a rhetorical answer to a philosophical question? We can, but in doing so, we must recognize that “here we offer no philosophy” (Heidegger, [BCArP 4](#)). This dissertation provides a positive ontology of rhetoric. By positive ontology, I mean an account for the being of that which is called rhetorical that is not defined by deficiency, as what we use in a pinch when the truth is unavailable. Rhetoric’s value to Heidegger is still of value to us today: in the *Rhetoric*, Heidegger discovers a way of approaching the very real being of language that did not distinguish between being and appearing and addressed in the most direct way *what* is here now, *how* it is here, now. The rhetorical is slippery because, as Aristotle carefully notes, the rhetorical speaks equally of that which is and that which appears to be as *phainomena*. Specifically, I argue that Aristotle’s rhetoric is crucial because it provides an account of language from the position of how the hearer takes things to be, where the “is” cannot be separated from the “appears-to-be.” A phenomenological account here is important because it is the school of thought that deals most explicitly with appearance.

We should understand, however, that the tendency to separate out things from their rhetoric is motivated by a wish to delimit the realm of the rhetorical, and that wish is both legitimate and desirable. As I said when addressing the importance of our question for research, the rhetorician’s move across disciplinary boundaries makes for thorny problems regarding the

length of rhetoric's reach. Drawing a line, for example, between the thing and the talk about the thing provides stable ground, but it may not be advantageous ground. First, this ground, as we have seen above, gets severed from the world *from which* and *toward which* the word addresses. Second, what would constitute "the word" itself is not so clear—does this mean all modes of expression? Does one count symbols or spaces as having expressive capacities?

As I will argue, I think the better way to delimit the reach of rhetoric is to understand it as a mode of temporally relating to things that can be otherwise, encountered in the shared time and matters of everyday traffic and trade. Rhetoricians have long recognized the role of time in defining and delimiting the rhetorical. Lloyd Bitzer's rhetorical situation, for example, is centered on understanding rhetoric in the context of *things that happen* (["Rhetorical Situation" 3](#)). By exploring the structure of everydayness and the conditions of its possibility, we can extend out from the situation toward the things around which the situation arises. Similarly, Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca emphasize the role of *presence* in *The New Rhetoric* as that toward which the hearer attends, yet their understanding of presence remains a matter of consciousness ([142](#)). I argue instead that the rhetorical is not a matter of consciousness but of what presses out from the world in which we live. As I show in chapter [two](#), everydayness is no amorphous concept. The expressed relations between speaker, hearer and matter show how one has a world in time. When matters are taken up as changeable in such a way that the changeability is relevant to people who share a there—a time and a place—we may call these matters rhetorical. Rather than split the rhetorical up along lines of whats, wheres and whens, we must approach rhetoricity as a how.

Until this point, I have approached the following dissertation from the perspective of value for a rhetorician. I think, however, that there is also value in articulating a rhetorical

ontology of things—of the capacity for something to *be rhetorical*—for the blossoming philosophical field of object-oriented-ontology (OOO). The basic thrust of OOO is simple—to build ontologies of not just human being, but of *other* beings, in part as a response to certain anti-materialist or anti-realist strains of post-structural thought. It is unclear, however, how one would even articulate a thing as an object (objects, of course, are particular types of things) outside the remit of language—if there can be an object without language. One contribution of this dissertation to contemporary philosophy is its articulation of the Being of things as taken up in speaking. In other words, rather than try to construct a theoretical perspective that effectively bypasses the remediation of language and turns the dial too far to the world from the word, a focus on how modes of language highlight presence may more productively investigate how the joining of the two comes to be.

Allow me to provide two examples. In his debate with Bruno Latour at the London School of Economics, Graham Harman argues that the position of a speculative realist is not that language or other metaphysical structures are *immaterial*, but rather that these explanations produce the faulty sense that the word fully expresses the Being of a being, that it is impossible to reduce the world without remainder. There remains a “reality that escapes any of its manifestations. You can never be sure quite what it is, but you can offer some description of what the structures of that reality are” ([Latour, Harman and Erdélyi 73](#)). Harman’s argument compliments Gaonkar’s warning against Alan Gross’ proclamation that science is “rhetoric without remainder” ([Gross and Keith, 6](#)). However, while the presumption that the word expresses the world—and its actors—without remainder might be an accurate description of certain strains of philosophical interpretations of language, it is certainly not a presumption held by the majority of rhetoricians—not now, and not initially. Aristotle’s basic distinction between

the philosophical and the rhetorical, I show in chapter [three](#), precisely concerns the question of remainders; the rhetorical deals with that which can be otherwise. As late Renaissance/early Enlightenment thinker Giambattista Vico proclaims, the Cartesian turn toward certainty robs one of the ability to deal with the world as it presents itself to the human being most often: as shaped by chance and choice in otherwiseness ([34](#)). Harman argues that the problem with quasi-metaphysical senses of language, whereby the word is essentially an intermediary between the subject and object, is a lack of *contact* ([Latour, Harman and Erdélyi 54](#)). Here I agree. Symbolic or representational theories require what I call throughout the dissertation a “detour” through consciousness (or conscience), cognition or psychological matrices. In contrast to such detours, in chapter [five](#), I use the proximal term “closeness” to describe the relation between the rhetorical word and world. Rhetorical speaking is incapable of addressing the thing in its unchanging essence—this is conceded from the Aristotelian jump. However, Aristotle (and following him, Heidegger) uses the language of tactility to describe the purchase of rhetorical speech upon the world. We grasp, take up and keep close. When presented with a choice over that which can be otherwise, the hearer chooses according to which speaking expresses a closeness with the hearer’s own everyday life, and the way in which this thing here now appears within that context of everyday life.

A second example: In *Alien Phenomenologies*, Ian Bogost is right to point out that a singular focus on the symbolic function of language that leaves out the nonsemiotic world gets stuck talking about talking, and leaves out possibilities of encountering things by doing ([90](#)). The rhetorical thing, in contrast, becomes a matter of concern when such doing is interrupted, and when that interruption reverberates throughout a shared region of traffic and trade (a region demarcated *in doing*). When the thing is present as a matter of *shared* concern arising in the

temporality of everydayness, its accessibility in contemporaneous presence and shared articulations of possibility moves through language, even if no one speaks a word. By attending to how a thing becomes possibly otherwise in shared time, we see how the thing's "edges of experience" are "imagined or explored" ([Bogost 56](#)), embedded in matters of concern. Only a position toward language that both works *through* language and acknowledges what remains beyond is capable of articulating the edge of experience. It is unquestionably the case that when humans share time, they share time not just with other humans but with other non-human things, and work that seeks to explain our ethical obligations to things that share our time but not our speaking is clearly important. It is the rhetorical that deals *most closely* with precisely such a movement *between* world and word.

1.5 THE PATH AHEAD: CHAPTER OUTLINE

The dissertation moves in its focus from time to rhetorical temporality to poetic/philosophical temporality and then returns to the rhetorical. Having established the need for a rhetorical ontology that takes not just that which is *spoken* as rhetorical, but that which is *spoken for* as rhetorical in chapter [one](#), I turn in chapter [two](#) to the function of time in revealing Being and its world in the present—which is to say in what is present to us, and how it is present. After establishing the role of temporality in structuring human Being, I move to a specific analysis of rhetorical temporality rooted in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* in chapters [three](#), [four](#) and [five](#), each chapter addressing a book of the *Rhetoric*. Finally, in chapter [six](#), I demonstrate temporal differences in modes of speaking by using the tools of rhetoric to unpack and loosen up Heidegger's later conception of language as emergent from poetized silence and approach a

recurrent—indeed a recursive—theme in rhetorical philosophy by isolating three moments of discussion about the fate and future directions of rhetorical research. Below, I offer a brief summary of my preliminary findings.

We must first understand time. Chapter [two](#) traces out the Aristotelian roots of Heideggerian phenomenology, from Heidegger's reading of the *Physics* to the role of everydayness in forming a foundation for Heideggerian phenomenology. We approach a time of flux for Heidegger. After spending years working on a book project to outline a phenomenological reading of Aristotle, Heidegger abruptly changes course at about the time of his lecture on the *Rhetoric*. Why the shift from Aristotle to *Being and Time*? In chapter [two](#), I first lay out the basic structure of time Heidegger develops throughout his early Freiburg-Marburg period, drawing on his lectures, manuscripts and *Being and Time* itself. I then work through the specific character of the temporality of everydayness. I close with an explanation of the challenge that Heidegger's reformulation of everydayness—and crucially, the rhetorical *speaking* of everydayness—presents to Husserlian and Diltheyan phenomenology and to the post-Aristotelian trajectory of Western thinking as a whole.

Second, we must understand how our speaking manifests our temporal world. In chapters [three](#), [four](#) and [five](#), having established the importance of time and its Aristotelian elaboration, I show how Aristotle's rhetorical theorizing forefronts the role of time. Its selection of matter, its structure in form, its way of movement and finally even the end to which rhetorical speaking aims are conditioned and differentiated according to time. Along the way, I show how *things* are taken rhetorically, and what that taking indicates about the relationship between Dasein and its world. Chapter [three](#) addresses the rhetorical thing in its futural horizon, which deals with things that can be otherwise, taken up with regard to a shared temporal matter of concern over what has

been, is now and will be, projected in speaking toward a decision. Chapter [four](#) deals with the rhetorical thing in its past horizon, as given already within a thick network of social attachment in disposition, habituated choosing and prior ways of familiar speaking—feeling, dealing and speaking. Chapter [five](#) shows how the rhetorical thing is made present and manifest in the speaking itself, from the voice, to the figure, to the movement of the speaking itself in time, all brought before the moment of decision: I have spoken, you have heard, here is what is, now decide.

Chapter [six](#) uses a Heideggerian-Aristotelian theoretical structure of rhetorical temporality, what Heidegger called “indigenous conceptuality,” to investigate Heidegger’s later reformulation of the nature of language. Indigenous conceptuality draws the concept from out of concrete facticity, directs that thinking toward a particular horizon and emerges from within a shared way of speaking. Given the initial comparison between the differing temporalities of rhetorical and poetic/philosophical speaking, I turn to a fuller *Destruktion* of Heidegger’s later poetic speaking centered on his *Dialogue on Language*. I engage in critique not to somehow reveal the *real* Heidegger, or for that matter the *real* Aristotle, but rather to show how subtle shifts in the way one approaches speaking in time fundamentally change how the word illuminates the world. I show how the Dialogue at one level resists the pull of everyday speaking, and yet on another must ground its investigation of language in a rhetorical mode of relation. The Dialogue proceeds through a series of recursions that slowly alter the speaking that has come before, giving the Dialogue a woozy, backwards-facing movement. Despite Heidegger’s attempt to sever speaking from its confused, elusive everyday circulation, the circle remains. I conclude with an alternate formulation of the Being of language that maintains a sense of open unfinishedness without a fear of the public.

Where does this reformulation leave rhetorical theory? I close chapter [six](#) arguing that the very Being of rhetorical speaking forces rhetoricians to engage in their own recursive conversations. Heidegger's path to rhetoric began with a simple Kantian problem—that our definitions, our names for being, are judged not by the *beings* the definitions delimit and attempt to show but in relation to the structure and system of right-naming. In other words, that the speaking of being becomes a problem of logical procedure. For the philosopher, the stability of naming and definition allow one to go very far along a way before needing to look back. As Heidegger contends, Aristotle's initiation of philosophical *logos* forms a consistent trajectory of thinking that extends over two millennia. We do not need to argue about things that cannot be otherwise.

The rhetorician has no such solid ground on which to stand. It is unsurprising, then, that we should hear periodic ruminations on the question of whether our methods and concepts are capable of showing what beings are, as they are. Rhetorical being *changes* and must be discussed with others who share a region of concern. The conclusion of chapter [six](#) isolates three moments of scholarly discussion: in the [The Prospect of Rhetoric](#), a collection of essays and transcripts generated by the 1970 Wingspread conference, 1996's [Making and Unmaking the Prospects for Rhetoric](#), which offers a retrospective look back 25 years later, and finally a third revaluation of Wingspread 40 years later in [Reengaging the Prospects of Rhetoric](#). Each volume brings together a diverse group of scholars to look back and then forward. These texts are by no means definitive of an entire 40-year span of thinking, but they offer glimpses into three key moments of discussion. First, *The Prospects of Rhetoric* explores the field of rhetoric's capacity to respond to the social upheaval of 1968. *Making and Unmaking* speaks to rhetorical theory in light of post-structural research and philosophy touched off in the wake of '68. Finally, *Reengaging* perches

between the crisis of Wingspread and the exhaustion of the post-structural. I show how in each case, the question of upon what rhetoric stands motivates discussion in multiple directions, but may fail to grapple with the being of rhetoric in things, and displace Being into either the realm of the word alone, in the structures of consciousness that allow us to access the world, or even in a complex of acts and practices. I end the dissertation with my own prospective look at rhetorical theory engaged not just with words, thoughts and deeds, but with *things themselves as being-rhetorical*.

1.6 CONCLUSION

Is it simply an accident of history that “being rhetorical” comes to mean, in an everyday sense, to not-be something? A rhetorical question is not a question, and a rhetorical response does not mean what it says. I do not think the curious inversion comes about by chance, for two reasons. First, the very Being of rhetorical speaking is being-otherwise. That which is addressed rhetorically is not simply latently or passively possibly-otherwise—its very particular otherwiseness and changeability in time is precisely of central concern. And thus, we can say one thing, while another happens. Second, taking what *is* as essential, unchanging and *real* in one hand, and what is partial, provisional and apparent in the other, the rhetorical word will always be outweighed by the heavy pressing mass of the world. In such a problem, too, lies the fate of post-Aristotelian research.

Change the phrase slightly, though, and we can begin to think about the problem another way: what of being, rhetorical? What is the rhetorical thing, and how is it had rhetorically? By first understanding how we account for the world in time, we can then work out a temporality in

which the world appears rhetorically. That appearance is real; it is how a matter *matters*. A rhetorical ontology grounded on the temporality of everydayness allows us to express not simply what a thing is, but how it is to us. Far from not-being, the rhetorical word illuminates the Being of the world for us, as persistent yet momentary, concrete yet fragile, real yet uncertain. To understand why, we first turn to time.

2.0 MOVEMENT, CHANGE AND TIME

[O]nly the way back will lead us forward.

([Heidegger, “A Dialogue on Language” 12](#))

Let me save you a great deal of time, should you wish to take my word for it and do something else with your morning, afternoon, evening or night. Here are the answers to the questions being asked in the next two chapters, and you will say you have never seen a person as brief as I.¹⁸ What is time? A marking of movement. What is movement? An account of change. What is change? The speaking of Being in time. Why do we speak? Because we hear. Why do we hear? Because it could be and it could be otherwise. What do we hear? Both is and otherwise, speaker and matter as given in everydayness. Now, I will explain.

2.1 HAVING AND SPEAKING TIME

We are still being guided by the initial question: What does it mean to say that something *is* rhetorical? Heidegger understands language as an expression of Being: language reveals a human world of relations and directions. The speaking that reveals Being does so in a very particular way: in relation to time. In chapter two, I investigate how time relates to human being, and how

¹⁸ Wink.

that being is made manifest in our speaking with one another, and in chapter [three](#), I describe to the temporality of rhetoric as distinct from other modes of language. If rhetoric is the mode of speaking directed toward and accounting for movement and change, and Dasein is defined by its dealing with this change, in the rhetorical we have a fundamental speaking of Dasein's possibilities of Being, fully engaged not only in thinking but in dealing with a world shared with others. We move from word to world to the very being of Dasein itself.

The investigation of Dasein's manifestation in time begins to answer the second motivating methodological question: when a rhetorician studies the "rhetoric of" something, what relation exists between the rhetoric and its thing (or the thing and its rhetoric)? How is the rhetorical, as a mode of speaking, related to the world it expresses? In chapter [one](#), I argued placing rhetoric adjacent to the thing implies a distinction between word and matter without working out the nature of that distinction. Starting with the structure of time, we will see how Heidegger critiques "adjacent" definitions of time and being, and embeds the human experience of temporality in all encounters with the material world—that indeed, time is a prerequisite for an encounter to occur as such. Matters can matter in many different ways, but those ways are not constantly, completely, and simultaneously present. Matters matter *to someone, for something*. For a rhetorical thing, understood temporally in the context of its matter, the most significant aspect of the thing's concrete facticity is its capacity to be otherwise in the context of changing, shared time.

In the following chapter, I will make a case for reading the early Heidegger as not simply an ontologist, but as a *kairologist*. By kairologist I mean that Heidegger is concerned with not just being, but being **and** time, and the ways we might access this being through the expression of time as an account: as time-for. The mode of speaking that accounts for time and being as it

initially presents itself—the origin of Dasein’s speaking—is in being-rhetorical. This interpretation of time is rooted in Heidegger’s lectures and publications leading up to and immediately preceding the publication of *Being and Time*, roughly defined by a ten year span from his early time as *privatdozent* at Freiburg through his professorship at Marburg (1919-1929). In chapter two, I will discuss how being-in-movement is taken up in speaking as time, and then turn to the particular way of taking up time that characterizes rhetorical speaking: everydayness.

Language speaks time. The “Dialogue on Language” begins with history, a reappropriation of the past (in Burkean terms, both a selection and a deflection, and in Heideggerian, a taking up of past and present given a particular now for-the-sake-of-which) that prepares the way for questions to come. Surveying his early career, Heidegger concludes that the time was not right for him to ask the question of language,

because reflection on language, and on Being, has determined my path of thinking from early on, therefore their discussion has stayed as far as possible in the background. The fundamental flaw of the book *Being and Time* is perhaps that I ventured forth too far too early ([Dialogue 7](#)).

From where did he venture too early? Heidegger here discards a path. This story of discovery and concealment, of the success *and failure* of the word to access Being, will have decisive implications for rhetoric’s temporality as distinguished from other modes of language. In short, for the early Heidegger, Being speaks and when it speaks it initially and for the most part does so rhetorically. For the later Heidegger, Being philosophically waits upon the world in silence, and then speaks hesitantly and poetically. This difference is rooted in Dasein’s relationship to time and its manifestation in speaking, so it is to time that we first turn.

Time is crucial to what it means to call something rhetorical. The rhetorical is not simply posited as adjacent to the thing, but rather expresses the thing in time, according to a distinctive

temporality. The thing is not outside of its rhetoric or next to it or surrounded by it. To say that an atom is rhetorical is to say that there is something *in* the concrete, factual realest-of-real atom that *is* rhetorical. In its concrete facticity, the presence of the thing, what is taken into concern and drawn out as relevant for the sake of something is guided by a rhetorical temporality.

First, a brief warning: the following chapter deals with language broadly, and focuses on philosophical theories of time. The implications of the concepts outlined below for rhetorical study will be gestured towards but not fully fleshed out until I engage in a reading of the *Rhetoric* in chapters [three](#), [four](#) and [five](#). We need to get key terms out on the table in chapter two. The subsequent three chapters will then apply this very particular reading of temporality to the context of language in order to show how rhetorical speaking differs ontologically from other ways of speaking. The difference lies in Dasein's way of having and accounting for time, as manifest in temporal expression.

2.2 TIME AND TEMPORALITY

Time is not the ticking of a clock or separation of day into hour, minute and second; clock-time confuses units of measurement for that which is measured. The capacity to reckon or calculate time springs from a more original experience of time in encounters with opportunities and possibilities discovered in the process of caring for the world. Prior even to “day” as a conceptual measurement of time is the observation of sunlight giving way to dusk and dark, repeated and made regular. These primordial measurements of movement in time as *change* are motivated by care, and directed toward dealing with the world in our everyday activities. In the experience of time, Dasein is pulled out of itself to encounter its world:

We first experience the one-after-another in the change of day into night, in the movement of the sun, in the way things around us change place, and so on. We use the sun to determine time, and so, the sun is time. Time is the sun, the heavens. These statements are not poetic fabrications; they express what one sees first of all—as Plato says: Time is the heavens ([LQT 278](#)).

In chapter one, I argued that the rhetorical is sometimes defined by adjacency—a thing *and* its rhetoric. In Heidegger’s description of time as a narrative before-and-after first experienced in day and night, there has been no adjacency of explanation. Before and after, in light and dark, are concrete and material. *Time is in the heavens*. These primordial measurements of time are motivated by care, and directed toward dealing with the world in our everyday activities. Time is where we say it is, how we say it is.

Rhetoricity maintains an original orientation toward temporality as reoccurrence *that is not guaranteed* and thus could be otherwise. The rhetorician is concerned with time-for, the appropriate time: that which, in the present, is essential for history. The rhetorical word refers explicitly to this lived time, as already, is and as yet. *Kairotic time* is time that is given to us and, motivated by care, bids us to find the “right time” to speak. Rhetoricity maintains a distinct orientation toward *public* time, yet this time is not wholly accessible by all. It cannot become fully objectified, open to the eyes of all, always as it is. Instead, the kairotic seeks to define shared, public time as a particular opportune time-for-something.

To understand what it means for Heidegger to say in 1954 that in retrospect, the time was not yet right to speak of language, we must first establish the relationship of the word to time—and not any time but the *right time*. The opportune moment gathers together rhetoricity, temporality and historicity, and constitutes the “horizon of all rhetorical argument” ([Smith 56](#)). Initially in the rhetorical horizon, movement becomes understood in another way, as change, a shift whereby one thing becomes in some way another. In the survey of temporality, we will see

how the thing in movement becomes a thing of possibility, when encountered in a way motivated by care for the what and where-for's of the thing and its movement. This is the moment where movement, a simple before-and-afterability, becomes change.

Every account of origins is always already an account of temporality. For Heidegger (and for Heidegger's Aristotle), *arche*-research seeks to uncover that which remains constant or endures in beings—persistent being, not outside of time but in itself in every moment. That which endures in beings is Being, and that Being is revealed in the very structure of time. In a 1925 public lecture series on the contributions of Wilhelm Dilthey to philosophy, Heidegger proclaims that the “fundamental character of Dasein is nothing other than time” ([Heidegger, Dilthey 151](#)). That human beings look to the sun and say there is time reveals Being's struggle to deal with movement as change, and then to seek out what does *not* change.

As Being's primary mode of encountering and interpreting the everyday, rhetorical speaking does not simply add meaning to an extant and discovered time (the time AND its interpretation), because time's “discoveredness” would indicate that it is already in some way meaningful. Instead, the present moment is discovered in the act of appropriating time, making movement and change meaningful as time-for-something. There are three key aspects of temporality: 1) time shows itself in movement; 2) time is structured by care; 3) by taking care, Being *temporalizes*, that is, Being has time in the form of a unity of past, present and future oriented toward a horizon of human action, of “almost, not yet, finally.”

2.2.1 Time as a marking of movement

Let us begin the discussion of time and movement with a brief phenomenological demonstration.

Watch as you wave a hand in front of your face. What do you see? The eye does not split the sweep of the hand into the presence of a sequence of specific, determinate spatial points, but rather perceives what Edmund Husserl calls a “comet’s tail,” the retention of the past in constitution of the now (32).¹⁹ This tail is limited, to be sure, but nevertheless it extends beyond itself into the moment before. For the early Heidegger, the question arises: how do we recognize this shifting, moving now, and to what extent does the present carry with it both past and future? How, in other words, does the present *present* [*Gegenwärtigen*] itself?

It is Aristotle, Heidegger contends, who builds a foundation for phenomenological research by approaching human being and action in such a way that avoids facile distinctions between the psychical and the bodily. Time is *in* movement, present in our immediate experience of the world and laid bare in speaking.

This is to be seen practically, for example, in the way that I move my hand, the way that I make a movement with it. *One must note that the primary being-there-function of bodiliness secures the ground for the full being of human beings* (BCArP 134, emphasis in original).

Time is not some artifact produced by the human mind; time in the moving hand as moving. Time is fully secured to and manifest in bodily, material things.

And yet, Aristotle still makes a distinction between the happening of time and our perception thereof—the representation of time (how we say there is time) versus time itself. This distinction, Heidegger argues, underwrites later, more radical interpretations of time either as subjective or objective. In Kant, for example, time is a subjective mental act of ordering sensibility (*Critique of Pure Reason* 370). The time of not yet and still to come are products of

¹⁹ The contemporary physiological explanation is essentially that the comet’s tail is a visual artifact: the moving hand exceeds the “frame rate” of our visual perceptive apparatus, and thus the moving thing’s definition in space blurs. Our eyes are low-def while the world is high-def. If we were engaged in an ontology of modern video recording technology, this might be a satisfactory answer, but for my purposes I prefer to see people as people and not fleshy metaphorical movie projectors. The comet’s tail is not the marker of absence or visual deficiency of human perception as “less than real”—the tail has positive presence.

consciousness. In this way, Kant follows Descartes in thinking of time as a subjective product of the *res cogitans*, the thinking being, applied to the *res extensa*, objective corporeal being. The necessary ordering *prior* to a representation of the sensible both *stands outside* of the surrounding world and *precedes* that world. Moving along the same basic path of post-Aristotelian thought, though in the opposite direction, Isaac Newton contends that the constant presence of time for human being implies that time is *objective* insofar as no object can be posited outside of time. Objective calculation of time—progression of eras, ticks of a clock and splits of a second—are accessible by all and applicable to all (even if, in the case of milliseconds, no longer perceptible by any) and stretch endlessly into past and future.

For Kant, time begins inside in the marking, for Newton outside in the movement. What of the connection, and space, between the two, and the transition between where the self ends and rest begins—what William James called “the one great splitting of the universe,” between me and not-me ([41](#))? Even Husserl draws an inviolate boundary along surface of the skin: “Between consciousness [*res cogitans*] and reality [*res extensa*] there yawns a veritable abyss of meaning” (Husserl, cited in [Heidegger BPP 124-5](#)). Time is either locked away in the subject or always outside as objective physical presence.

Heidegger’s task is to reclaim time *in* movement without relegating time to subjective order or objective state. In order to uncover meaning where Husserl saw only a chasm, Heidegger develops the concept of temporality, of time as *account* rather than count, a time-for in the place of number. By approaching time as account, we will be in a better position to understand how Dasein accounts for time, and how this accounting demarcates different modes of Being and speaking.

Time is as it appears. Time is present to us first of all as movement, a constant transition

always in relation to both a before and an after. Time shows itself in the comet's tail as the relic of before (the blur) stretching back from the now (the hand's position) and even in its future (as the eye leads the moving hand, just before). Heidegger roots his initial exploration of time and the movement of Dasein in Aristotle's treatment of time in *Physics* Book IV. Drawing from Aristotle's distinction between time, movement, and (ac)counting, Heidegger calls time "*what is counted, showing itself in the following, making present, and counting the moving pointer in such a way that making present temporalizes itself in ecstatic unity with retaining and awaiting horizonally open according to the earlier and later*" ([BT 386](#), emphases in original). The present is not a particular determination of time, but rather Dasein's accounting for time determines *what* is present and *how* it is present. Time is in the counted—the heavens, the hand, the pointer. Thus we begin with Heidegger's "existential and ontological" interpretation of Aristotle's definition of time.²⁰

Aristotle asks: "the 'now' which seems to bound the past and the future—does it always remain one and the same or is it always other and other" ([Phys. IV 10 218a9ff](#))? The now is the way time shows itself in experience—the link between the bodily and the psychical remains intact, rather than split off into subjective or objective realms: "[t]ime is not deduced for Aristotle; both time and its sameness are equally retrieved from the fact of the matter itself" ([Heidegger, IPR 21](#)). Time is grasped "with an eye to the before and after," that is, in movement, stretching outward ([BCArP 198](#)). This movement takes place in a concrete context, a particular present that extends out beyond itself to before and after. Heidegger explains that Aristotle's

²⁰ Heidegger's most expansive treatments of Aristotle and time occur in the 1927 summer semester lecture *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*. Section 81 of *Being and Time* features a condensed version of the same arguments (see Kisiel for an extended discussion of the relationship between these two works). In addition, Heidegger summarizes the Aristotelian position again in the summer 1925 lecture, *History of the Concept of Time*, as well as the 1924 monograph "The Concept of Time" (published posthumously) and a shortened public lecture of the same name. Heidegger connects temporality to logic as a system of expression in the winter 1925 lecture *Logic: The Question of Truth*.

condition *kata to proteron kai husteron* (in the before and after) refers to both time and place, a “presented context of places, the point manifold, in the horizon of an ‘away from there—toward here’” ([BPP 245](#)). For Aristotle, any explanation of time that does not preserve the character of movement as dealing with both being and its otherwiseness, from “has been and is not” (there-before) to “going to be and not yet” (here-after) will not hold—these explanations cannot accurately describe time as it presents itself (as “the fact of the matter”) to human Being.

Does this otherwiseness of movement from has-been-and-is-not to going-to-be-and-not-yet imply that time is “other and other?” Aristotle moves from corporeal argument to conceptual argument. Aristotle argues that time cannot be constituted by nows next to one another for the same reason that points cannot be laid next to one another in a chain to make a line: points, like different nows, are indivisible and without extension, and thus cannot contain a beginning or end, before or after.²¹ There is no span. Pure points cannot extend into space as pure nows cannot extend into time. Does this make the now then “one and the same?” If the “now” remains the same from one to the next, we would experience the whole of time as simultaneously present. *Now* would be identical with 10,000 years in the past and 10,000 in the future—the now becomes *pure extension without limit*, and again without before or after. We can neither define one “now” from the next as pure difference, nor can we call each “now” the same without in each case rendering “before” and “after” meaningless.

Aristotle must reconcile the stability of the now extending itself through time, and the difference between this particular now, that which came before, and that which comes after. Time is “both made continuous by the ‘now’ and divided at it” ([Phys. IV 220a](#)). This constant

²¹ “Nor, again, can a point be in succession to a point or a moment to a moment in such a way that length can be composed of points or time of moments: for things are in succession if there is nothing of their own kind intermediate between them, whereas that which is intermediate between points is always a line and that which is intermediate between moments is always a period of time” ([Aristotle, Phys. VI 231a21](#)).

transitional marking of movement and change gives time what Heidegger calls a “dual visage”:

To de nun dia to kineisthai to pheromenon aiei heteron, on account of the transition of the moving thing the now is always another, an advance from one place to the other. In each now the now is a different one, but still each different now is, as now, always now. [...] the now is the same with respect to what it always already was—that is, in each now, it is now; its *essentia*, its what, is always *the same*—and nevertheless every now is, by its nature, different in its now; nowness, being now, is always *otherness, being-other*” ([BPP 247-8](#)).

As Aristotle notes in *Physics* Book IV, though moments may be considered separately, because they move in succession from one to another, there can be nothing of a different kind in between them. Between “times” there is still time. Thus we can speak of a succession of moments, understood individually, occurring within a continuum of self-same time.

Though I will expand on the relation between momentary and continuous time later, I want to note that continuity and difference in time is a matter of concern for rhetorical practice beyond Aristotle. The Sophistic²² *Dissoi Logoi* is perhaps the clearest example of a temporal ontology of rhetoric—that what *is*, rhetorically, is in the moment. The *Dissoi Logoi* reinterprets conceptual, categorical oppositions between good and bad, honorable and shameful, just and unjust, and true and false as ontologically-same rhetorical oppositions—as being the same in *dissoi logoi*, two-sided speaking. In the language of this dissertation’s central question: “What does it mean to say that the good and bad **are** *dissoi logoi*?” *Dissoi logoi* present the continuity of social expectation (the appropriate) and the difference of situation (perspective, time and place, intent, prevailing belief) before the moment of judgment: is this, was this or will this be good or bad, honorable or shameful, just or unjust, true or false? Is it the right act at the right time? In context of the kairotic moment, the conceptual oppositions between good and bad give way to ontologically-shared rhetoricity—their sameness—as *dissoi logoi*. Like time’s expression in the now, the

²² Controversy abounds over the proper dating of the *Dissoi Logoi*, with estimates ranging from the late 5th century BC, to the early first century CE, and even a case for the late Byzantine ([Bailey 249](#)). It will suffice to say for my purposes that the *Dissoi Logoi* is strongly representative of a Sophistic perspective.

rhetorical has a dual visage whose Being is Being-other. Good and bad are not the same in the sense that things are simultaneously good and bad, or neutral, but rather are *possibly* so when standing before a decision. Even murder is, in a particular context, acceptable. What stays the same in the opposition between good and bad, honorable and shameful, just and unjust, and true and false, interpreted rhetorically rather than conceptually, is in *essentia* that they are capable at each moment of being otherwise. Across time and circumstance, the good becomes bad and vice versa.

Movement does not move itself, Aristotle reminds us, beings move. At each moment in its movement, a being carries in it reference to what it is not, its before (that which it was) and after (that which it becomes). We mark the transition of something from...towards..., different in each moment, but continuous as being-in-movement. “The συνεχές [the continuous] occurs when the limit of the one that touches the other is one and the same limit” ([Heidegger PS 79](#)). Each now as a now reaches into before and after, without intermediary: “Time is a whole and continuous; the past, present and future are linked” ([Aristotle Cat. VI 5a7](#)). Duration is thus a product of the continuity of time that stretches from one moment to the next, in the same way that continuity “makes up the principle” of magnitude in terms of bodies—they are both “determinations of co-presence.”

Time and movement are not the same; time is *expressed* in motion: “we apprehend time only when we have marked motion” ([Phys. IV 11 219a21](#)). Aristotle describes even “losing track of time,” failing to mark motion, as a definite happening. Time is grounded in the perception of motion, and when motion goes unmarked, time *seems* to disappear. Even in its disappearance, time *is*. Left unmarked, time was present in such a way that it disappeared from view.

With movement, time approaches and recedes from the one who marks: “If, then, the non-

realization of the existence of time *happens to us* when we do not distinguish any change, but the soul seems to stay in one indivisible state, and when we perceive and distinguish we say time has elapsed” ([Aristotle, Phys. IV 218b](#), emphasis added). We are within-time to such an extent that, though time is perceived by us as motion, even our perception of rest happens in time. “Even when we are not experiencing something moving in the sense of some entity presently at hand, nevertheless motion is taken in the broadest sense, hence time, is unveiled for us in experiencing our own self” ([Heidegger BPP 254](#)). Losing track of time is a particular way of having time and marking it, though what is marked is ultimately absence or non-realization (as when one struggles with forgetfulness).

Time is not the same as movement, but neither is it independent ([Phys. IV 219a2ff](#)). Movement is an attribute of time insofar as movement is not identical with time but rather is how time shows itself, in how the thing appears, most often articulated the form of counting. Time is what we call our *marking of movement* ([Phys. IV 223a25f](#)). As noted above, Aristotle relies upon we say about time’s passage, how time is apprehended and expressed in relation to what has come before and what lies ahead:

When, therefore, we perceive the ‘now’ as one, and neither as before and after in a motion or as an identity but in relation to a ‘before’ and an ‘after,’ no time is thought to have elapsed, because there has been no motion either. On the other hand, when we do perceive a ‘before’ and an ‘after,’ then **we say that there is time**” ([219a30ff](#), emphasis added).

Accounting for time embeds the phenomenon not only in the realm of presentation (perception) but in articulation (the count). Yet even in the articulation, “now” is simply a manner of speaking about transition that seems to hold “now” still: “That time is a limit in the sense that I say that motion ceases, stands still, in a now—this is a *sumbebekos*: it is only an attribute of the now, but it does not reach its essential nature” ([Heidegger, BPP 251](#)). This essential nature of the now is in

transition. “That which is bounded [$\acute{\omicron}\rho\iota\zeta\acute{\omicron}\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\nu$, made definite or limited] by the now we call time” ([Phys. IV 219a30](#)). The now marks/bounds/defines time. The now, in other words, *temporalizes*.

Counting off marks time, but the marking-off of hours and days are only how *we say there is time*, not time itself. Aristotle sharply distinguishes between the determination of time and the numbers with which we count: “Time obviously is what is counted, not that with which we count: these are different kinds of things” ([Physics IV 219b8f](#)). Time cannot be the sum total of movement between fixed coordinates because it lacks a determined beginning or end. That we assign a time-code to a particular “now” is not definitive of that now. As Aristotle argues, in the same way that the number of horses present in a place does not define “horse,” measurements of time in days, hours and seconds do not constitute “time.” Counting-off is a particular possible articulation of temporality, time-for-us. As we will see, however, the objective time of the clock is quite different from the kairological temporality of rhetoricity. The original experience of accounting for time is made manifest in bodiliness and expression: the taking, making, or losing of time in caring for things in a world. This origin is obscured if we mistake time for ticks of a clock.

2.2.2 Time and care

If time is that which we count, care *makes time count*, and further moves Being-there to *account* for time. Aristotle argues that time “belongs to movement” in two ways: first, time allows movement to be marked as before-there and after-here, and second, time itself moves in transition from before to now and towards after. Heidegger defines time as “a specific *mode of movedness* in the sense of a character that not only makes movedness possible, releasing it from

within, but co-constitutes it as itself moving in an autonomously factual way” ([PIA 103](#)). This thing goes from here to there, from and to. We now say it was, it is, it will be. In its moving, the world—and our place in it—comes to be in time.

What is this movement that temporality makes possible—what *moves* Dasein to mark time? Heidegger calls care “the basic sense of the movement of factual life” that initially draws Dasein out of itself toward the world as it “*goes about its dealings*” ([PICA 115](#), emphasis in original). Temporality marks not just the happening but the *sense* of movement in care—movement as for-the-sake-of something. The “being of Da-sein itself is to be made visible as *care*” ([BT 53](#)), and this primary movement is articulated as temporality. Time belongs to the movement of care.

There is, however, also no movement outside of temporality, without a marking of before and after. Being moves because it is drawn outside of itself toward the world by the ecstatic nature of temporality. The “now” has a dual visage: it is constituted by before and after, drawn out of itself, and contains both presence and absence. It is for this reason that Heidegger calls temporality “the *ekstatikon par excellence*. Temporality is the primordial ‘out of itself’ in and for itself” ([BT 302](#), emphasis in original). In *Being and Time*, Heidegger describes Dasein’s two primordial movements, thrownness and anticipatory resoluteness,²³ as a pull and a push corresponding to before and after, both held within the now. Thrownness, one’s existence in a world already underway, pulls Dasein back into what has been (or what has been said). Being interprets. Anticipatory resoluteness pushes Dasein ahead of itself toward the future. In anticipatory resoluteness, Being stands open to the possibilities at hand as the now changes, and becomes otherwise from moment to moment. Being awaits. In having-been and becoming,

²³ “Anticipatory resoluteness” [*vorlaufende Entschlossenheit*] give way to “openness” [*Gelassenheit*] in Heidegger’s later work, deemphasizing temporality.

Dasein is directed outside of itself toward its possibilities, as constituted through that which (and *where*) it has been before. What is at issue, then, is *how* the movement of care temporalizes the world by giving an account.

In chapter [one](#), I argued that rhetoricity deals with that which has the capacity to change in time, but up until this point, we have concerned ourselves with movement. What is the relationship? Aristotle distinguishes between movement and change. Change (*metabole*) is a kind of movement (*kinesis*), but not all movement implies change. Movement *as change* expresses that something towards which we are already concerned is capable of being otherwise than it is. The thing is significant in its capacity to change. To mark change, Being must be able to claim that a thing is, but is in such a way that attends to the insecurity of our claim—that it could be otherwise as well, and otherwise in determinate ways. Thus Being must attend to and care for *how* something is in time.

Care has three constitutive factors: existence, facticity and fallenness. By existence, Heidegger simply means that, as living, Being takes up certain possibilities of action. Being moves, does, copes, and cares. Both thrownness (acting already) and anticipatory resolve (readying to act) presume that Dasein *can* act, and moreover is *disposed toward* action, be it playing catch-up or running ahead. Temporality is not a *product* of existence, but is existence itself in Dasein's being drawn out of itself while taking in presence ([LQT 168](#)).

These possibilities of action exist in concrete, determinate ways for each being—as factual. Care is not experienced without context, as though it were some sort of fog of vague apprehension. Possibilities are determinate, laid out before one concretely rather than idly imagined. Care is directed toward specific situations taken to be objectively present. Care is care-about and care-for *something*. Being-there cares for things that are at hand and close by—that

with which Being-there dwells. Dwelling is both regional and temporal, as Heidegger writes in the notes to BCaP,

There = being-present, being-completed, being-here in the now, in a presence, in being-present, being-there-having, abiding with...

Abiding, being-in precisely the there of living. A stone does not abide, it happens. But an animal: 'It abides' in its heart! $\Theta\upsilon\gamma\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu$ and $\acute{\alpha}\phi\eta$:²⁴ primary and primitive being-in. 'Dwelling'! Οὐσία , 'household'! 'In'='abiding with...', cf. Grimm! Primary hermeneutical category not at all spatial as being contained, contained in...With-which of abiding! (257-8).

Dwelling then indicates a particular way of knowing and interacting with the things at hand, which is not merely in a world but *has* a world. Dasein presses upon the world, and the world presses back ([Heidegger, OET 185](#)). Taken together, existence and facticity indicate that Dasein is simultaneously "occupied in its existence with this being" and "occupied with its ability-to-be-in-the-world," that is, Being-there is occupied with both beings and Being ([BPP 270](#)). Heidegger refers to this dual structure of care as the twofold. We can see the twofold at work in the earlier definition of time as a mode of movedness as both a factual happening (the count), and as the ability to say that movement happens (accounting: confronting time in the course of taking care).

Care, as constituted by existence and facticity, is an inclination toward the world. The world in which Being-there dwells, however, is not its own—this world is shared, entangled with others so tightly that it cannot be fully untied. This entanglement offers the movement of care a second possibility or countermovement: Being recoils ([Brogan 19](#)). The recoiling of Being does not indicate a lack of care. Rather, avoidance of Being initiates itself in care—one may respond to the definite, concrete possibilities of movement by refusing, omitting, overlooking, avoiding, delaying. One puts off or delegates judgment. As movement, fallenness retreats from the world

²⁴ *Thigein*: to grasp. In the *Metaphysics* Aristotle uses *thigein* to describe the disclosive work of *noesis* ([Berti 100](#)). As 'supposing,' *nous* has a particular type of grasp upon the world (BCaP.139). *Aphe*: in the *Metaphysics*, in contact or touching. Motion, for example, is not divisible into discrete acts in contact or touching one another ([Aristotle Metaphysics 1016a 5ff](#)). As will be discussed later, Heidegger tends to use tactile metaphors when discussing nowness as presence.

at hand, and temporally becomes the slave of the clock. Without a “for-the-sake-of,” Dasein can only fill or kill time, second-by-second and minute-by-minute.

While Heidegger is critical of the ways in which fallenness robs Dasein of its possibilities (e.g. doing something in a certain way because “that is how it has always been done”), he never suggests that fallenness is avoidable. Fallenness belongs to Being-there as its countermovement. Appeals to an imagined ideal world of *purely authentic* Being-there, Heidegger charges, engage in the same sort of superficial thinking the appellants claim to avoid:

This characteristic of movement [fallenness] is not an evil feature of life appearing from time to time and able to be eradicated in more progressive, happier times of human culture. This is so little the case that such approaches to human Dasein in terms of an attainable perfection and a paradisiacal naturality are themselves only extensions of this very inclination toward falling into the world. Here one closes one’s eyes to the ownmost character of movement belonging to life and views life in a worldly manner as an object of dealings able to be produced in some ideal form. That is, one views it as the toward-which of simple concern ([Heidegger Dilthey 117](#)).

To go further, though it is marked by a deficiency or absence (an overlooking), fallenness is still grounded in Dasein’s fundamental mode of temporality. As fallen, Being-there *entirely concerns* itself with the now, recoiling from what has been and will be, losing itself in the flux of “other and other.” In other words, concerns with beings generally and for the most part eclipse care for Being-there’s ability to be. One sacrifices Being to the concern with beings. But Being-there must be able to move in two ways, both toward and away from the world. Without the possibility of recoiling, Being-there would never have to make a decision, never see *this* time as right or wrong. Without the capacity to decide between approaching or withdrawing, there can be no authentic Being. The point of decision is crucial for the rhetorical, which deals explicitly with both the everyday language (and temporality) of what “they say” and with the particular possibilities available for decision. Imagining Dasein unburdened by entanglement and

fallenness is as fruitless as fantasizing about human being freed from death. Despite their fruitlessness, both are rather popular.²⁵

Circumspection (Heidegger's translation for *phronesis*) is the mode of care directed toward the latter half of the twofold, care toward the ability-to-be (Being). Circumspection cultivates a capacity to encounter the present and its possibilities. By being circumspect, Dasein momentarily overcomes (but never eradicates) the tendency toward fallenness. The temporality of circumspection addresses the present not as a bare "now" in an endless series of nows, but as an opportune moment. Circumspection attends to the way in which Dasein actively engages the world, so that the "with-which of dealings is in advance grasped as..., oriented to..., interpreted and laid out as..." ([Heidegger, Diltney 115](#)). The present is made visible as presence in authentic care—the *moment is at hand*: "Resolute, Da-sein has brought itself back out of falling prey in order to be all the more authentically 'there' for the disclosed situation in the 'Moment' [*Augenblick*] ([BT 301-2](#)).

In the structure of time, we see the structure of Dasein itself. Taken together, the three factors of care illustrate that, as existing, Dasein goes about its dealings in a particular shared world. Temporalizing accounts for time-for-something, as something that moves and in which Being moves. Here, we have gotten ahead of ourselves. If, by accounting, Dasein temporalizes, what makes this accounting possible in the first place? We have established *that* temporality is expressed, but not *how* it is expressed. Entwined, language and temporality bridge Husserl's abyss: "Only where temporality temporalizes itself, does language happen; only where language happens, does temporality temporalize itself" ([LQCEL 140](#)). In order to isolate the structural elements of time, Heidegger looks to the way people speak about time—how time is made

²⁵ Or as Heidegger himself puts the joke: "I stress 'human' because in philosophy we really must stop confusing ourselves with the good God—unlike Hegel, for whom that confusion is a principle" ([LQT 222](#)).

manifest in human expression. In *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, Heidegger identifies four key elements of temporality as structured by care: significance, datability, spannedness, and publicness.²⁶ These elements are necessary conditions for the speaking of time, and all share care's dual possibilities of movement: significance, datability, spannedness, and publicness all move toward caring for time or falling away into the They.

2.2.3 The structure of time: Significance, datability, spannedness, publicness

Expressed time has a “character of for-the-sake-of and the in-order-to,” articulated in terms of appropriateness: “[t]ime is always time as the right time or the wrong time” ([BPP 271](#)). Heidegger terms this time-for of care and circumspection *kairological*. As opposed to indifferently encountering an “uninterrupted succession of nows” ([BT 388](#)), Heidegger's emphasis upon the right-time-for indicates that Being-there is always already *making sense* out of time using the terms of the world to hand. Past, now, and future are ecstatically present in the situation, even if they are present as missing, forgotten, and awaited. Rather than experiencing past, present and future as discrete and objective, temporality articulates time as “not yet, as to be...for the first time, as already, as approaching, as until now, as for the time being, as finally” ([OHE 78](#)). Significance, datability, spannedness, and publicness enable Dasein to express, interpret and address temporality.

Significance. As a movement, care draws Dasein out of itself from past to future. But this movement is not haphazard—it is guided by a particular “where-to.” This “where-to” interprets the world as something that coheres together. Our world is the shared region in which we dwell with

²⁶ *Being and Time* includes only three elements: datability, spannedness and publicness. Significance is subsumed in the broader concept of care. I prefer to keep significance in view to emphasize that time is *already* meaningful, and it is in the context of this meaningfulness that we date particular moments, observe the span in between, and share this time with others.

things at hand that point out of themselves, as being-for, or being-conducive-to discovered by circumspection. “We understand such matters as the in-order-to, the contexture of in-order-to or being-for, which we call the contexture of significance [*Bedeutsamkeit*]” ([BPP 165](#)). The things to which we are drawn immediately “in-order-to” mean something to us already. By contextualizing objects in terms of “in-order-to, what-for, for-that, and for-the-sake-of-which” significance *makes* a world within the movement of factual life ([BT 333](#)). Significance orders and gives (or denies) meaning to the other inhabitants of the world, addressing both beings and Being. Even encountering objects as bare facts or mere things is possible only within particular interpretive schemas:

Objects are originally there for one as objects having significance, whereas objects in the sense of mere things and facts first emerge from the world as it is factually encountered (i.e., out of what has significance) within a multistage process of theorizing directed to the world in a particular manner. Factual life moves at any time within a certain state of *having-been-interpreted* that has been handed down to it, and it has reworked or worked out anew ([PICA 115](#)).

Janus-faced care presents another movement between authenticity and fallenness—confronted by a world structured by significance, one may engage circumspectly by attending to interpretation, but one may also rely on the interpretations handed down by others. One may deal with either one or both of the twofold of beings and Being.

In the specific context of temporality, significance marks time as time-for-doing-something: “Time as right and wrong time has the character of significance” ([BPP 262](#)). Right or wrong time is already meaningful for us as time-for-something. Futurally, Being expresses time as “for the sake of” something to come, that which has been as “in the face of,” with the now present as “in-order-to” ([BT 333-4](#), see also [BPP 270-271](#)). The right and wrong time express dealings in the world as horizontal (directed outward along a ray of possibility), and in doing so demarcates both the world, and Dasein itself: “expressed time here is simultaneously that *for*

which the Dasein uses itself, *for the sake* of which the Dasein itself is” ([BPP 270](#)).

Datability. This investigation of time began with Aristotle’s claim that the now contains not a past and future, but a *before* and *after* (*proteron* and *husteron*). The difference between the two, of course, is while “past” and “future” refer solely to the passage of time in the abstract, “before” and “after” implies a relation of time to doings in the world. More specifically, “before,” “now,” and “after” all express time in the context of movement. Datability refers to this seemingly self-evident “before-and-afterability” that expresses time in terms of relation. Now is neither an undifferentiated slice of time nor a link in a chain of succession—it is *this* now, though we rarely ever express this particularity: “every ‘then’ is *as such* a ‘then, when...’; every ‘on that former occasion’ is an ‘on that former occasion when...’; every ‘now’ is a ‘now that....’” ([Heidegger, BPP 263](#)).

Datability expresses time as *happening*: “what is more a matter of course than that by the now we mean ‘now, when this or that exists or is happening’” ([Heidegger, BPP 263](#))? We can now better understand what Aristotle means by “that which is bound inside the now.” Dating expresses presence within time—*this* now. Past and future are presented within time as well, as the former occasion when such and such has happened and or as then, when such and such will happen. Each indicates both present and absent being: that which has come before, and that which comes later, and thus is horizontal. This happening is what we mean by the *present moment*—a time at hand, available to the factual, concrete Being. Datability allows us to experience time, then, as other in relation to other.

Spannedness. The moments expressed as happening in “on the former occasion,” “now,” and “then,” are not strung up against one another like beads in a necklace. Even when described as a sequence, there is an in-between. Happenings unfold across durations of time. The now is

not reducible to a point, but rather “every now, then, and at-the-time not only has, each, a date but is spanned and stretched within itself: ‘now, during the lecture,’ ‘now, during the recess’ ([Heidegger, BPP 264](#)). In saying “on the former occasion,” “now,” and “then” we speak of a certain span of time, a transition from and toward the moment articulated as a date. Between the former occasion and now there is a “meanwhile,” the now itself stretches out into “during,” and between now and then there is an awaiting. This expression of time has its origin in the ecstatic character of temporality:

Since every expecting has the character of coming-toward-oneself and every retaining the character of back-to, even if in the mode of forgetting, and every coming-toward-self is intrinsically a back-to, temporality qua ecstatic is *stretched out within its own self* ([BPP 269-270](#)).

In other words, each moment in time, we bring what has been into our expectations for futural horizons, as well as a futural projection toward what has been. Each horizon of possibility stretches outside itself, leaving no pure past, future or present. In marking the beginning and end of movement, temporality also marks the span of that movement as duration.

Spannedness and datability are connected with one another. The “now” is dated in relation to before and after, and so extends outside of itself. Spannedness constitutes this extension that reaches out into the next moment. This span, too, is datable. What Heidegger calls a “primary then,” a particular moment one is awaiting, can be further articulated into other “from then...untils” ([BT 376](#)). While working on this chapter (primary then), I will now write about spannedness and then write about publicness. Dating articulates the span of the now. “Now, in the present age” implies a much greater span than does “Now I am waiting for the kettle to boil.” The “stretchiness” of time allows it to be accounted for in various ways, but not in infinite ways. Now is now-that something is happening, a reference to the now in which “we can articulate the stretching out of time always only in specific ways” ([Heidegger, BPP 249](#)). “Now, while I am at

the dentist's office" ends with my departure from the building when the appointment ends instead of extending indefinitely into the future.

Publicness. The now is *expressed*, even if not said aloud, when we account for time. But accounting cannot happen in isolation. As Dasein's world is shared with others, so is its time. Up until this point, we have seen the ways in which Dasein orients itself toward its ownmost time—that of its caring circumspect dealing with the world. Time, however, is not an invention of a singular being. It is always already before us as significance, already underway as both spanned and datable in a shared world filled with other beings. Others are also in time with us; we can talk about now, before and after, and everyone will basically understand what we mean.

We can express public time because the particular dating, spannedness, and significance need not neatly match up with one another. As I write "now," my now will certainly be dated differently from that of the reader, and yet we are both still in the now. Indeed, we are *made a we* in this now! "Although each one of us utters his own now, it is nevertheless the now for everyone. The accessibility of the now for everyone, without prejudice to the diverse datings, characterize time as public" ([Heidegger, BPP 264](#)). The problem arises, however, when public accessibility obscures the world-making capacities of spannedness, datability and significance. Being-there *has* time, originally experiencing time as time-for. In contrast, public time seems to be outside of us, assuming what Heidegger calls a "peculiar objectivity" in which the now "belongs neither to me nor to anyone else, but it is somehow there. There is time, time is given, it is extant, without our being able to say how and where it is" ([BPP 264](#)). Time becomes significant only as bare fact, indifferent to span or date, ticks alone. The abyss of meaning between the *res cogitans* and the *res extensa* yawns again—time moves outside of us.

It is important to underline here that we would be faced with the same chasm were temporality *not* public. We are initially and for the most part within public time. Indeed, only publicness of time enables Being-there to grasp the now in its ecstatic temporality stretching out into meaningful before and after:

The now is not the sort of thing that only one or another of us could somehow find out; it is not something about which one of us might perhaps know but another might not; rather, in the Daseins' being-with-one-another itself, in their communal being-in-the-world, there is already present the unity of temporality itself as open for itself" ([Heidegger, BPP 270](#)).

To say that we are together is always to say that we are together now, that we are present to one another. The publicness of time holds a shared world together. As Heidegger notes in *Being and Time*, one orients oneself toward time in taking care, so "it must somehow be available for everyone" ([377](#)). Indeed, circumspection demands that one attend to the world as it presents itself in "definite, factual possibilities," and that includes as public and shared. Even expressing time as "right" and "wrong" indicates that time lies before us, accessible by all and wisely chosen by some. To go further, any circumspect dealing with time, any heeding the right and wrong time, must properly account for publicness—first discovering "what is factically possible in such a way that it grasps it as it is possible as one's ownmost potentiality-of-being in the they" ([BT 275](#)). Circumspection presumes a capacity to negotiate one's own public, shared time with others, and it is in this shared time wherein Dasein's "ownmost potentiality-of-being" is first discovered.

Taken together then, the structures of significance, datability, spannedness and publicness provide the basic requirements for Being to mark movement in time. First, attending to a particular thing-that-moves requires that the thing have meaning already—it must be significant. Next, the happening of movement must be attributable to a moment in time as a date to be able to

distinguish between “formerly, when the movement started” and “then, when it ceased.” A span is implied in between these dated moments (and even within those moments themselves), giving movement a duration. Finally, the terms used to articulate movement must be available in advance to Being-there and thus publicly accessible. We do not invent movement, but we mark it for ourselves.

2.2.4 Dasein temporalizes: understanding, attunement, entanglement, discourse

Dasein temporalizes: it marks the time of the world through engagement with that world, interpreting the now in such a way that “now” has particular possibilities open to it in the context of before and after. Significance, datability, spannedness, and publicness first make it possible to address the world as a world in time. In temporalizing, Being-there engages in the interpretive presencing of the world: “[t]he making present that interprets itself, that is, what has been interpreted and addressed in the ‘now,’ is what we call ‘time’” ([BT 375](#)). *Having, appropriating* and *losing* time, *encountering* a world and *undertaking* a project are all articulations of the Greek middle voice, between passive and active, indicating that one participates in that which one undergoes. It is both with and before one. It is neither the passivity of determination nor the activity of pure agency. In accounting, Dasein can either make or lose time for itself. In this section I will investigate the four modes of interpreting and addressing time: understanding, attunement, entanglement and discourse. Temporalizing, as the fundamental work of interpretation of time, is how “there” becomes a world, that is, how “there” is opened for Being-there as a place in which it dwells. When Heidegger says that Dasein *is* temporality, he means that the “there” of Being-there always implies “there-now.” Understanding, attunement, entanglement and discourse are modes in which the “now” constitutes its “there.”

As explained above, the now of temporality is ecstatic and horizontal. Grounded in the marking of movement, temporality contains a unity of before, now, and after, which remains in transition. Motivated by care, Being is moved out of itself, but this movement is not haphazard or random. The ecstasies contain a horizon, a “whereto” for which circumspection provides the “wherefore.” Attunement, understanding and entanglement articulate this “whereto” in discourse that “concerns the *not-yet-present*, speaks about what *has-happened-already*, treats the *existing-there-right-now*” ([BCArP 90](#)). Each mode of interpretation orients itself to a primary ecstasy of time. The primary ecstasy modifies or shapes the unity, constituting “now” and the possibilities presently open to it given the concrete situation. The primary ecstasy does not eclipse the others, but articulates before, now, and after in the terms of a specific whereto.

Dasein is primarily futural in its orientation—it encounters the now in terms of possibilities for being and becoming. Understanding articulates Being’s projection toward certain possibilities in terms of “for the sake of something.” In understanding, the now is encountered as on the way to or from becoming-otherwise, but the possibilities of becoming belong to Being in the now. In other words, “Da-sein always *is* as it can be” ([BT 309](#)). This futural “for the sake of” is not *fully* determinate. Understanding still takes place in the now and responds to that which has been. That for the sake of which one cares may very well prove short-sighted or wanting. New concerns may arise, and events may force themselves upon one. In these situations, the future does not disappear—it changes, or becomes otherwise. Given the changeability of the future, Being must have all its possibilities available as given in its There. “Understanding constitutes the being of the There in such a way that, on the basis of such understanding, a Dasein in existing can develop the various possibilities of sight, of looking around, and of just looking” ([BT 309](#)).

Attunement is primarily oriented toward the having-been. As thrown into the world, Being-there finds itself already in a particular way. Dasein encounters possibilities “in the face” of what has been. This concrete and non-objective having-been Heidegger calls mood. “Mood represents the way in which I am always primarily the being that has been thrown” ([BT 312](#)). To say that attunement is how one finds oneself before the world, as having-been, is not contradicted by Dasein’s futural direction nor its existence in the now. Instead, “[m]ood temporalizes itself, that is its specific ecstasy belongs to a future and a present, but in such a way that having-been modifies the equiprimordial ecstasies” ([BT 313](#)). One may be disposed toward seeing the future as promising or as forbidding.

More often than not, moodedness escapes us because it is preconceptual—mood stands before *logos*. In an elevated mood, being is easy—the future is bright, the now harmonious with its past. The world is as it should be. In an anxious mood, being becomes difficult. In the now, but burdened by her past, one worries about and attempts to evade the future. The future, for the anxious person, is presently worrisome. Because Being-there projects what it has been upon the present preconceptually, moodedness can hide behind what one takes to be objective presence. We do not say that we are having a difficult time with life, but that life itself is difficult. Attunement, then, is a cultivated awareness of mood. By working with understanding, attunement “gives light to each mood, each passion, each affect” ([Heidegger BPP 281](#)).

Entanglement constitutes Dasein’s present. Depending on Dasein’s direction of movement, the present may present itself as a Moment, or as lost to flux and novelty. In the fallen form, understanding and attunement are thinned out into curiosity—a directionless interest in the now that fades quickly with time as Dasein seeks what is always new. Entanglement engages with things here now for the sake of now-ness, not for the sake of the thing, and with

change for the sake of change, rather than change for the sake of becoming. As the mode of Dasein's existence in the present, entanglement cannot be wished away but must instead be worked through. In entanglement, Dasein is confronted by its own self as lost in the other-and-other and its always-newness. Dasein first finds itself in entanglement. Thus, Dasein's *overcoming* of entanglement must arise from *within* entanglement as the necessary prior condition.

Finally, discourse is not structured by a particular ecstasy of temporality but, as speaking, privileges the present. In the act or happening of speaking, we may address what has been or is to yet to come, but this act draws the ecstatic directions of time into the now and in so doing brings the present into expression. Discourse gathers together the world in presence, but this world is one that is explicitly shared with others. In discourse, we express time as not entirely our own but rather as drawing together a unity of speakers, hearers and matters. "A discourse has reached its end only when it is taken in communication" ([Heidegger, BCarP 84](#)). Discourse itself moves, in giving and taking amongst the speaker expressing his/herself to someone about something.

Dasein is its time: Dasein confronts its possibilities as laid out in factically determinate ways, encountered in the course of existing, and expressed as a process of moving from-to, absorbed in concern. "If life, then motion, *kinēsis*. If motion, then time" ([Struever 108](#)). Moving backwards, we go from the speaking of time to the primal and original condition of human living—its Being. In attending to its ownmost possibilities in the given situation, Dasein becomes circumspective towards its time: time *can be* right or wrong. Dasein sees itself in presence here and now, as lost and uncertain amongst others, out of step in time, yet searching for the right time. The immediately present is taken into the Moment and opened up, as Dasein is moved from entangled concern to genuine care.

The discussion of time began with that which initially lies before us and points the way: how we say there is time. We say that time contains a before and after contained in the now. Before and after are revealed in movement and change, and appear in articulation—an accounting for time. Being is moved to account for time by care, drawn out of itself by being disposed to action in existence, dealing with the concrete and already-existing in facticity and recoiling in fallenness. As encountered in care, time is given to Dasein as temporality, and this temporality is characterized by four elements: significance (for-what), datability (before/now/then-when), spannedness (from-until) and publicness (availability at hand). Dasein temporalizes: it brings into presence in taking care, through understanding what is to be, attuning to be properly disposed to what lies before one already, entangling itself in the now and addressing its shared being in time with others in discourse. *Kairos*, as a way of having time (as right/wrong time or opportune/inopportune moments), expresses Dasein's being-moved to care for its own time. In orienting itself toward the opportune moment [*Augenblick*],²⁷ Dasein confronts its entanglement in concern for the now and encounters time in its authentic Being. We have not yet seen, however, *how* this confrontation is possible in the first place, and what one confronts.

²⁷ "Opportune moment" is a non-standard translation of *Augenblick*, though it better captures the evaluative sense of *kairos*. The majority of translators render this term in English as "the Moment," or the "instant" ([Stambaugh, BT xvi](#); [Pöggeler, "Destruction and Moment" 137](#); [Brogan 176](#); [McNeill 44-46](#)), however I have chosen to use Schrag's ([Experience and Being 70](#); [Communicative Praxis 206-207](#)) addition of "opportune" to emphasize that Dasein's temporality is *directed-toward-something*. The Moment is always a moment-for-something, as temporality is "*time for...*" ([BT 379](#)), conditioned by the appropriate. In other words, "*opportune moment*" makes the connection between *Augenblick*, *kairōs* and kairological time explicit. And indeed, on the rare occasion that Heidegger translates *kairōs* into German, he uses *Augenblick*:

Schon Aristoteles hat das Phänomen des Augenblicks, den καιρός, gesehen und im VI. Buch seiner «Nikomachischen Ethik» umgrenzt, aber widerum so, daß es ihm nicht gelang, den spezifischen Zeitcharakter des καιρός mit dem in Zusammenhang zu bringen, was er sonst als Zeit (νῦν) kennt. (DGP 408).

[Sheehan translates the passage in BPP to read "Aristotle already saw the phenomenon of the instant [*Augenblick*], the *kairos*, and he defined it in the sixth book of his *Nicomachean Ethics*; But, again, he did it in such a way that he failed to bring the specific time character of the *kairos* into connection with what he otherwise knows as time (nun)" ([288](#)).]

Heidegger's account of time leaves us with a bit of a conundrum: what is to be done with the present? How can Dasein overcome fallenness without severing contact with the immediate and factual? Dasein draws out of itself in the ecstatic reach of time—to the shared, initial and open public time, regulated through familiarity and repetition. Time is in the heavens, in the light and dark, and in the human struggle with existence. As *kairotic*, we address time in own being and ability to be. We cannot lose sight of presence in the present, or resign the present to status of a partial and indeterminate middle-ground between the already and the as-yet. Presence is not a construct of consciousness or a natural, physical essence. Presence *is* as it is marked by time.

Heidegger finds the genuine being of the present in *kairos*—time as encountered in the context of concerned dealing with the shared world already at hand, present in possibility and chosen in light of Dasein's futuralness: Time as time-for. When oriented toward the right or appropriate moment, Dasein is confronted not only with the factual world, but with Dasein's own capabilities, limitations, dispositions and comportment in given the situation. Care emerges from concern.

Kairos makes Dasein's temporality *explicit*, not only to others but to Dasein's own self. The kairological expression of Being in time speaks to the “actualization of facticity” ([Heidegger, PIA 102](#)), an encounter between beings and Being. To see time in its fullness, we must grasp both its movement, ecstatic and drawn out of itself in before and after, and as well as its gathering a meaningful region into co-presence. The moving outward and gathering together are directed in a *telos* toward a for-the-sake of fulfillment, conducted by a particular how-to of Being in time. It is not simply the matter or situation that changes—Dasein confronts its own movement for the sake of which, within the context of the factual situation. Dasein is confronted by its own Being in a shared and shifting There-when. In the moment, which must come before

any given when (the kairotic question is precisely “when?”), the present is seen in its possibilities arrayed from the concrete situation. The terms of the now cannot fully encompass this present—when if not now? Dasein is shaken out of its complacency to take time and presence into its own hands, directed toward a particular where-to. We are not fully entangled in our concerns, but resolute in viewing the possibilities for the *right time*. The can-be breaks loose from the always already is, bringing the factual world into authentic presence when Dasein waits and gives time and presence to the world ([Heidegger, PIA 103](#)). Only in this taking up of the factual can Dasein “take over its own thrownness and be in the Moment for ‘its time’” ([Heidegger, BT 352](#)). The opposite of the kairological, then, is not the *wrong time* (wrong time too exists as an authentic possibility of being—not now) but having no time at all. In the case of the later, time is present as already lost.

Right-time indicates that Dasein can take its own time into circumspection—concern with beings meets care for Dasein’s own ability-to-be. Dasein is confronted with itself, its having been and its going toward in this sudden now calling out. The movement of time meets the punctuation in a now of change and being-otherwise. Walter Brogan describes this awaiting within movement:

This *kairos* which is other than *chronos* always involves ceasing, disruption, rupture, the breaking off of activity. This metabolic time of the *kairos* is on the one hand the opposite of movement and from that point of view it is rest; but on the other hand it is the essence of movement, the concentration of movement in the returning into itself, out of which the emergence of *being* is made possible ([Brogan 133](#)).

The now, initially given over in concern, can no longer be simply taken as given and must now be addressed. We are moved to give time by change.

Movement and change, in the moment, are characterized by a being becoming-otherwise. We may wait for a moment, but the moment draws away. As McNeill explains, there is “no

human *logos*, neither the *logos* of thought, nor that of a prior knowing or having seen, nor that of calculative deliberation (*technē*), can decide what happens in the moment” (118), thus the taking up of the moment should not be thought of in terms of “correct” or “valid” judgment. Correct judgment presumes that there is a pre-existing right answer with which the situated judgment is brought into agreement as verified. Emphasis here would be on the *claim* of being as a statement to be evaluated as correct or incorrect. The opportune moment, however, is the preceding ontological condition for beings to be brought first into their Being. There is not an external right answer against which our taking up of opportune time is to be judged. In the opportune moment, the world presents itself to us. Anticipatory resolve toward our for-the-sake-of-which directs our encounter with the time that does not hold still. In circumspection, Dasein gathers its possibilities from within the factual, concrete, available and shared. Being cannot await forever.

To be able to see Being, as it makes itself manifest in speaking, we must follow the movement from concern to care. The task of phenomenology—indeed, Heidegger argues, the task of all philosophy—must be grasping the movement between what has been given and toward what we strive. Here all Being, from great to small, first encounters itself.

Only the way back will lead us forward. If Dasein sees its authentic possibilities in the opportune moment, it sees from somewhere already and looks toward something with an end in mind. In this movement, we can become overly-attentive toward the before and after while missing the transition in between:

Motion necessarily includes this indeterminateness, the unfinishedness, the not-having-come-to-the-end. This character of being under way to something is essential for motion. [...] Aristotle explicitly stresses, in *Phys.* Γ 2, 201b24ff., that this phenomenon of motion, namely that it is ἀόριστον [‘indefinite’], is difficult to see. For there is a tendency to focus only on the two end stations, to allot the main accent to the ends. But the essential task is to see the “between the two,” to determine ontologically the transition from one thing to the other (Heidegger, *BCAnP* 235).

We move back from speaking. To truly see between the stations, to observe Dasein in a way that makes it accessible in thought, we must attend toward movement, expressed and captured in temporal speaking. If we are to loosen being from the already interpreted in order to engage in original thinking, we cannot simply reject that which comes before. *Kairos* draws the already into questionability in the moment. By turning our attention to the rhetorical, we will see how the possibility of going through what is for us already toward what remains questionable and outside, first arises in speaking.

Heidegger regards rhetoric as the speaking that interprets and returns to the everyday, and philosophy as that which leaps out of the everyday. Having secured Dasein's initial and general being in the speaking of everyday concern (rhetoric), Heidegger can—or *thinks* that he can—move to the alethic speaking of genuine Being (first philosophy, later poetry). But the transition in between remains under-theorized. The moment arises in movement, and the rhetorical is the mode of speaking addressed to that which changes. Rhetoric aims for the *kairos*. And should Being draw itself from the everyday to the genuine, it must do so through the grasping the opportune moment as it arises from within everydayness.

We have not fully dealt with the world as it appears to us immediately in the already-meaningful present. Dasein is open to the moment in retrieve and prospect. Not the present as present in an isolated and disjointed now (other and other) but as in movement toward and away, between stations. We do not reject the now but return to it through prospective aims, moving toward something else and becoming something else for-the-sake-of that which is not yet. This is how the *Rhetoric* works: in addressing the act of speaking, Aristotle first considers the aim toward which one moves (the moment of decision, where the hearer must choose between possibilities), then what (and who) stand already before the speaker and who are as they have

always been, to only at the last turn to the act of speaking itself and how it is capable of manifesting and moving things. All are directed to the moment of decision over a thing that can be otherwise, and is so in shared time with both speaker and hearer. Having drawn up the moment, in time Dasein returns to the everyday, but the everyday now has been renewed. It has changed. There will be more regarding the movement out of and return to everydayness later, but we should note now that the ecstatic structure of temporality is present even in Aristotle's definition of rhetoric: The capacity to see (in understanding projection), in any given case (attunement to what lies before), the available means of persuasion (present in the now, entangled in speaking of others). The *Rhetoric* brings everyday speaking into circumspection, the speaking of concern to the remit of care, and reveals Dasein as it exists initially and for the most part.

Thusfar, I have established Heidegger's early phenomenological exploration of time, as presented in his lectures and first major published work *Being and Time*. Time is a marking of movement as change from...to... that contains a before and after within the present "now." As a marking, time is characterized by datability, publicness, spannedness and significance. In this way, time is never merely measurement, but always primarily *meaning* insofar as the marking of time articulates movement in terms of change oriented toward some sort of undertaking or completion. Dasein marks time in terms of its doing, as time-for. This experience of *having* or *appropriating* time as time-for-doing Heidegger calls temporality. Temporality gives Dasein a world, a region unveiled and made meaningful by Dasein's particular undertaking. By addressing what "now happens," temporal expression brings the world to presence by addressing the changing world as with us in the now. The temporality of Dasein, its way of having time, moves in two directions. One may "take time" in care for that with which one engages

thinkingly, or one may “lose time” in fallenness and allow oneself to be a slave to the clock. In any case, whether as made or as lost, Dasein has its time.

I have engaged in an analysis of time in order to make the case that temporal expression manifests how the world *is for us*, not as discourse but as concrete facticity and realest-of-real. The present *presents*: what is present is encountered in its most real reality, and in that presence extends outside of itself to the before and after. Now we are prepared to turn our attention toward Dasein’s primary mode of having and marking time—the temporality of everydayness. Everydayness is characterized by an expectant concern that interprets, deals with and waits upon the world. Everydayness is crucial for understanding how rhetoric as a speaking and as a *theorein*, a way of seeing, accounts for time in a way that distinguishes rhetoricity from other modes of language. In everydayness, Dasein speaks rhetorically.

2.3 THE TEMPORALITY OF EVERYDAYNESS

In the final two sections of this chapter, I will first define and elucidate the concept of everydayness as Dasein’s primary mode of being and, second, explain the role everydayness plays in grounding Heidegger’s early phenomenological critique of Husserl’s intentionality and Dilthey’s lived experience. I will close with some preliminary implications of the temporality of everydayness in grounding rhetorical presence, that is, the being of the rhetorical thing as present. This grounding in the point of jointure between the world and the word, I argue, is the foundation for Heidegger’s early phenomenology and its later excision disconnects speaking from that of which it speaks as it is present in shared, changing time. The rhetorical, poetic, philosophical, scientific—these ways of speaking are not confined to categories of things, but

rather are delineated by the way that these modes of speaking claim a thing in time. If Dasein's accounting for time makes how Dasein has its world manifest, then the speaking of everydayness manifests the way in which the world is for us initially, generally and for the most part as our realest reality.

Rhetoricians are hardly ignorant of the role of everydayness in shaping and delimiting the reach of rhetorical theory, but precisely what constitutes the everyday—what and how the everyday shapes and delimits—remains obscure. Too often, the everyday is used as a foil against the specialized, defined tacitly by what the everyday is not and positioning the everyday as less-than-genuine or less-than-real. It is a way of doing characterized by its ordinariness apart from heightened moments of life. Even more problematically, everydayness is juxtaposed with specialized *knowledge*, indicating that everydayness is a way of knowing rather than a way of being and supposing it as a product of consciousness rather than in present temporal facticity. In these arguments, everydayness is used interchangeably with lived experience as alternative ways of knowing. Readings that take the everyday as a category of interpretation (simply the general against the specialized) lose its rooting in time, and those that take the everyday as a category of experience (a different way of knowing) lose the everyday's rooting in presence.

2.3.1 The rhetorical temporality of everydayness

Consider two moments in *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*:

- 1) “*Rhetoric is nothing other than the interpretation of concrete being-there, the hermeneutic of being-there itself*” ([75](#), emphasis in original).
- 2) “Everydayness leaps over and so back into itself, not philosophically out from itself” ([247](#)).

These two passages highlight the temporal ecstasies of being in speech, that is, they show how the rhetorical word lays out past and future within an account of the now. Heidegger's interpretation of rhetoric as the speaking from and toward the everyday implies a particular temporal orientation. Everydayness is central to rhetoricity—or, more precisely, everydayness is the temporality of being-rhetorical. As interpretation, rhetoric first draws out what is there for Dasein before or already. That interpretation is projected outward in a very specific way—rhetoricity is a speaking that both addresses and returns to concrete Being-there. Claims made to everydayness do not transcend the beings of which the claims speak: they can always be otherwise. The speaking of everydayness forms a provisional view from out of provisional views. Provisionality makes everydayness both difficult to capture analytically and crucial for an account of language as a phenomenon that precedes any particular logical, grammatical or discursive formation and moves us to engage in such formations in the first place.

As a mode of speaking, everydayness articulates the world in terms of our initial encounter, drawn from the prevailing talk, the presence to hand, and our projected with-a-view-to. The claim of the initial encounter may hold generally and for the most part, but not absolutely, because that which is claimed in the encounter changes in time. Dasein is its time, that is, the way that we have a world is determined by our relationship (expressed as an account) for that which has been, is, and will be. Rhetoricity is the mode speaking that addresses how Dasein temporally has its world initially and for the most part, in everydayness. In rhetoricity, rather than skip over or leap out of the everyday, Being dwells both *in* and *upon* everydayness.

2.3.2 Rhetorical temporality and phenomenology

It is clearer now why Heidegger proclaims that it is better to have Aristotle's *Rhetoric* than a philosophy of language. Aristotle's account of rhetoric plays two crucial roles in Heidegger's early work, first as a foundation for interpreting Greek philosophy and second as an alternative grounding for phenomenological research. First, the *Rhetoric* provides historical context for Greek being as it relates to speech. The concrete and factual context of Greek speaking grounds Heidegger's radical re-interpretation of Greek ontology, wherein Heidegger's phenomenology becomes Aristotelian, rather than (with apologies to Hans-Georg Gadamer [["Heidegger as Rhetor" 50](#)]) Aristotle becoming a Heideggerian phenomenologist. Second, the implications of this re-interpretation mark the turning point for Heidegger's early philosophy. Armed with Aristotle's description of everyday Greek speaking, Heidegger frees phenomenology from prior abstract acts of apperception, perception or cognition, and thus from reliance on problematic concepts like "lived experience" and "intentionality." In this section, I will take a closer look at how Heidegger's investigation of everydayness, and its manifestation in rhetorical speaking, played a crucial role in shaping his revolutionary phenomenology and built a foundation for *Being and Time*.

Everydayness is elusive. It disappears into the obvious, the familiar, the real, extant and present. As a mode of existing, everydayness draws no attention to itself, because in this mode Dasein is absorbed in and attends entirely to dealing with the world. In everydayness, Dasein addresses the world as it immediately appears²⁸ to be without dwelling upon how the world came to appear this way. By focusing on its concerns in the world, everyday Dasein is blind to itself.

²⁸ A trickiness of Heideggerian vocabulary: *Appearing* [*Sichausnehmen*] and *seeming* [*Schein*] are not synonyms. Dasein accesses all the world in terms of appearance—appearance is that which "resists διαίρεσις" or division ([BCArP 209](#); [Grundbegriffe 308](#)). Seeming is a particular condition in which the thing is taken as otherwise than it is, "to look like...and yet to be" ([BCArP 242](#); [Grundbegriffe 359](#)).

Even though Dasein can (and does) overcome everydayness at times, it cannot escape to some sort of ideal realm of thought and action. Nevertheless, everydayness is not entirely invisible. “Everydayness itself is manifested within a fundamental basic-structure: its *temporality*” ([Heidegger, BCarP 90](#)), made present in expression. We are beginning with the structure of expressed time to move back to an examination of Being. As a way that Dasein lives its life, everydayness is expressed in its particular way of accounting for time. Speaking in an everyday way “concerns the *not-yet-present*, speaks about what *has-happened-already*, [and] treats the *existing-there-right-now*” ([BCArP 90](#)). All Dasein, from the majestic to the mean, lives its life initially and for the most part in everydayness. “All that is great in the *Dasein* of the human being is, at the same time, also small, at the same time diminished and, with that, ambiguous” ([LQCEL 19](#)). Let us take a closer look at what it means call everydayness a “*How of existence*” ([BT 338](#)), in which Dasein lives initially and for the most part.

The following elaboration of everydayness is valuable for rhetoricians because everydayness as a temporal, ontological relation to the world complicates several interpretations of what precisely constitutes “the rhetorical.” We can interpret rhetoric as co-terminous with a type of action or discourse—that where we find discursive exchange, there is rhetoric. We can interpret rhetoric in a quasi-spatial sense, as occurring in a distinct sphere of life using a distinct mode of communication. We can interpret the rhetorical as a type of occasion, a when certain speaking takes place. Taken together, we can define rhetoric according to *what* it is (an activity or discourse), *where* it takes place, or *when* it takes place. Heidegger’s sense of everydayness as a temporality, a *how* of Being, calls into question each of these ways of defining what the rhetorical thing is.

Everydayness is not a what, where or when. It does not describe a category of activities (like chores or routines) as a “what” might do. Do not confuse the speaking of everydayness with “a discourse.” Discourses are undertakings, not objects: “Discourse is always discourse about something and expressing oneself about something, and it is always with and to someone” ([Heidegger, Diltthey 164](#)), pointing toward and away from the world. As an undertaking, discoursing may be undertaken in different ways, and everydayness describes one such way of being that expresses itself in discourse concerning the has-happened, the there-now, and the not-yet. That there can be something like “a discourse” at all is due to Dasein’s tendency in everydayness to take the publicly available word—what was said—as a stand-alone object of attention, cut off from speaker, hearer and matter. Only in everydayness can the word first be taken as *self-evident*. Everydayness also does not describe a “sphere” or place in which we engage with the world in an everyday way that ceases when we, say, walk into a conference or a laboratory. Dasein encounters its there as a “where” only by orienting itself to its surroundings in a particular (spatialized) way, as when reading a map. In everydayness, by contrast, Dasein’s *there* is revealed in undertaking—there where thus-and-such takes place. Dasein accounts for its surroundings in terms of appropriateness in-order-to [*Um-zu*], the nearness and farness to hand of the waiting material, the relative remove from a starting point or destination, the distance of a loved one. And while it describes a particular temporality, everydayness is not defined by a specific “when.” To define everydayness as “the time when I concern myself with the world” gets the relationship precisely backwards. By absorbing myself in concern, I have time in a particular way already—as time when I am undertaking something. My time is articulated in terms of concern. “The time when I concern myself with the world” does not define everydayness—it *presupposes* everydayness. By exploring everydayness in greater depth, we can

see how the whats, wheres and whens of rhetorical speaking intersect with the things that speakers and hearers share in time.

2.4 EVERYDAYNESS AS A *HOW* OF LIVING

Everydayness is not seated in a particular word, sphere or time, but in rather how speaker, hearer and matter bring the world into being in speaking. Everydayness is a *how* of existence, “a way *to be*” ([Heidegger, BT 339](#), emphasis in original). In concerned everydayness, Dasein fixes upon whats, wheres and whens in the course of living its day in terms of fitness for the undertaking at hand. In the way Dasein lives its day, *what* is a what-for, identified in terms of usefulness. That which is seized upon as present in everydayness is, in the positive, ready-to-hand, and in the negative, absent or deficient. The relative nearness and farness of the ready-to-hand forms the *where*, a region in which undertakings take place. *When* is when-something-takes-place: when I make the coffee, when I take the dog out... The *when* of everydayness designates the proper time for the undertaking. But the *how*? Dasein is in everydayness *initially* and *for the most part*, interpreting what is already there and expecting what happens as a rule but not always. In this way Being and its There are first revealed.

2.4.1 Initially, generally and for the most part

By initially, I mean that there is nothing logically or temporally prior to everydayness. To simultaneously address the logical and the temporal, which both concern what comes before and what follows, we could say that everydayness requires no *prior conclusion*. For the Heidegger of

the 1920s, phenomenological destruction finds its terminus in the everyday. There is no prior condition of human being, nor a “real” life waiting underneath the skin of the everyday. Everydayness is Dasein’s “most real reality” ([Heidegger, Diltthey 164](#)). When thrown into the world already underway, Dasein draws the meaning and significance of its concrete surroundings from those public ways of addressing concerns made available through everydayness. This is not to say that Dasein begins in everydayness as a child and matures to some greater authenticity. *Everydayness is a condition of possibility of all speaking*, in which initially “Da-sein is ‘manifest’ in the being-with-one-another of publicness, even if it has ‘basically’ precisely ‘overcome’ everydayness existentially” ([BT 339](#)). The transcendence of everydayness can only initiate in everydayness and is made manifest in everyday public being-with-one-another. Even when one waits upon the *right* word, one waits upon the everyday. And when the word is delivered, it can only be shared by being made accessible to others—the word *initiates*, and it does so amidst the everyday.

I am not using “conditions of possibility” here to indicate a sort of abstract intellectual categorial scheme or cognitive framework through which the world can then appear. When beginning an analysis of the *Phaedrus* in *Plato’s Sophist*, Heidegger explains that while “conditions of possibility” echoes Kant, he has something different in mind—an elaboration of the “elementary conditions of evidence, and of proof regarding its propositions and concepts” ([PS 223](#)). Conditions of possibility point to the situation in which an occurrence takes place. Saying that everydayness is a condition of possibility for the speaking of Dasein means that everydayness provides a “structure of occurrence” for speaking as a happening borne in and by the matter. A focus on conditions of possibility and their structures of occurrence eschew airless, mechanical accounts of causality in favor of an ontological investigation of how something

comes to be what it is, as it is, in the context of time. Heidegger emphasizes that the Greek *legein* highlights these conditions of possibility in the context of speaking, showing that there is no bare speech but always speaking with others about things, which allow us to then explore *how* speaking occurs in its concretion—*legein* means “to express oneself about something to an other or with an other. Thus definite moments of the structure are intimated; the phenomenological horizon becomes richer and more determinate” ([PS 223](#)). These conditions of possibility are further articulated in Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* as the “phenomenal state of speaking,” the irreducible relation of speaker, hearer and matter. In terms of the corresponding “elementary conditions of proof” that join together world and word, these relations emerge and are made manifest as *ethos*, *pathos* and *logos*.

As initial, everydayness provides the grounds for interpretation, so that speaking, hearing and dealing with matters are possibilities of occurrence. Everydayness opens up the world to interpretation initially in speaking with and about what which is there already, is now and will be. As a marking of movement and change, this initial interpretive grasp on the world is grounded familiarity, but not certainty.

Interpretation addresses what is, has been or could be everyday in terms of a specific modality—as that which holds generally and for the most part. There are two ways to understand how everydayness generally and for the most part “‘shows itself for everyone ‘as a rule,’ but not always” ([Heidegger, BT 338-9](#)). First, as something that continues throughout the entirety of Dasein’s life, everydayness is pervasive. There is no great plane of consciousness or more virtuous realm of being above the everyday that one may inhabit. Second, the speaking of everydayness takes matters as given generally and for the most part when Dasein orients itself

toward the world in concern for that which is changeable in time. The everyday has regular contours and repetitive occurrences, but is not wholly secure.

Everydayness is accounted for and addressed in the familiar and expected—in the familiar I already recognize this as that, and in the expected I wait for the familiar to occur, or more precisely, to *reoccur*. In this way, what is *present* in a world changing and underway is approached in the context of relative constancy and reoccurrence—gesturing both forward and backward in time. But part of the “most real reality” of Dasein is also the reality of change, misapprehension or being-otherwise. We are concerned about the world and must attend to it because the world does not always do what we expect, and may be taken as familiar when it is something different. The particular and the situational are brought into view over and against the familiar and expected. But if Dasein is oriented toward the familiar and expected, it tends to see what it wants to see, mistaking the provisionally partial for the absolutely necessary.

The possibilities of Dasein are not entirely determined by the limitations of everydayness. Dasein can orient itself toward the world in other ways. We should note, however, that any transcendence of the everyday is, at best, momentary and cannot be brought on by refusal of the everyday, but rather by a taking-up. In the kairoitic moment, one has opportunities open beyond the everyday, but even overcoming everydayness occurs, according to Heidegger, in the context of shifting time: “existence can also master the everyday in the Moment, often only ‘for the moment,’ but it can never extinguish it” ([BT 339](#)). Even when reaching out of the everyday and grasping not time for anyone but *this* time, *this* moment, Dasein does not stand still. Mastery in the Moment is only for the moment. As we have discussed above, unlike philosophy, rhetoric is concerned with not simply the taking-up of the moment, but also the return to the everyday. For

rhetorical speaking, aiming toward *kairos* means aiming toward making the moment not just Dasein's own time, but the *time for all*.

So everydayness is not in and of itself a pejorative term. It is important to emphasize that the *everyday* and the “*everyone*” are not the same—the distinction is blurry even in Heidegger's own work. Everydayness is the temporality in which the world is first given over to Dasein. The everyday is still particular, still factual for Dasein. Indeed, in everydayness we encounter the concrete and worldly for the first time. Rather, Heidegger's consistent warning is that the possibilities laid out before Dasein in everydayness, as it is for Anyone and everyone, should not be interpreted as the *only* possibilities. Dasein is initiated into the world in terms not of Dasein's own making. The world is given over from others, and the temporality of everydayness provides the conditions of possibility for this giving over and taking up to occur. One must recognize the limits of everydayness, Heidegger admonishes, and not take what is small for what is great, the endlessly repeated for the originally created, nor the generally sound for the strictly necessary.

2.4.2 Sharing a world in time

The surrounding world is shared with others. For Dasein's world to be interpreted in terms of in-order-to, belonging “to everyday trade and traffic as the soil from which they grow and the stage where they are displayed” ([Heidegger, BT 354](#)) one must presuppose that these interpretations ready-to-hand in relative ease of access exist as an “*already-present-something*” ([Heidegger, HCT 199](#)). As existing and at hand, the world is accessed through and within terms made publicly available. These terms are *before* one in both the spatial and the temporal sense—they have already been given to you and thus stand waiting and available. What is present is present as already-having-been-determined by others. Dasein, in everydayness, lives its life as essentially

already accounted for: “our lives are lived in terms of the Others and are lived as it were by them.” The Anyone²⁹ is here before us, available without preconditions. This Anyone is not a layer on top of Dasein, or group one joins and leaves but is how Dasein lives its day—it “defines the primary reality of human Dasein” ([Heidegger, Diltney 164](#)). The world presents itself to us as already made sense of, already there and with us. The world is obvious, made self-evident in terms passed from hand to hand. Matters and things exist because they are available and are available because they exist. They have names, uses, positions and presence in the now, given to Anyone from Anyone, Anywhere, Any time. Evacuated of view, place or time, the everyday takes on a new name—the objective. We allot emphasis to the ends, *I* and *it*, and miss the transition in between: *I am*, *it is*...

We will return to this theme when describing the positive critical perspective offered by rhetoricity, but for the moment, I want to draw a distinction between public *accessibility* [*zugang*, *Zugänglichkeit*], and public *availability* [*verfügbar*, *Verfügbarkeit*, and also *vorhandensein*, being already-to-hand]. For Dasein to have a world at all, into which to be thrown in and then deal, that world must be publicly accessible. As discussed earlier, publicness is a constitutive element of time. Without a way to say that now is now for all, we cannot even begin to account for time, or understand the world and others as co-present with ourselves. For me to think and write “now,” and for you to read “now” may imply different nows, but they are all of them now. “Now” is publicly accessible, even when it is taken up in different ways and follows no regular chronology. The *availability* of time for all is taken up in a particular way in everydayness. Everydayness, as a mode of being, accesses that which is public in terms of its

²⁹ There are many possible translations for *das Man*. I prefer Theodore Kisiel’s ([249](#)) use of “the Anyone” because it emphasizes quality of Being rather than quantity of beings. Dasein does not become “the They” or everyone simply by joining a group. Rather Dasein can be entangled in *das Man* because participation requires no precondition. The only way *Everyone* can do it is if *Anyone* can do it. “The Anyone” stresses this state of undifferentiated prior availability.

availability—the publicly available is there already in such a way that anyone can make use of it (say, when we call work “the 9-to-5”). The distinction is temporal: the publicly accessible awaits interpretation, the publicly available is already interpreted. In this way, the everyday ties the being-at-handness of the surrounding world with the being-with of others ([Heidegger, HCT 237](#)). This question of the modes of access of the world, the jointure we have sought between world and word, forms a constant through-line for Heidegger’s work—it is in the play between accessibility and availability that will shift his interest from speaking to silence in his later years.

And here we can see where everydayness intersects with the rhetorical. As the fundamental hermeneutic of everydayness, rhetoricity addresses the process of that interpretation: how is everydayness initiated, born from itself? How do we move from accessibility to availability? Prior to objectivity, the rhetorical addresses everydayness as it appears—both as possible and possibly otherwise, in *phasis* and *kataphasis*, claim and counterclaim. In addressing how speaker, hearer and matter all speak *for* the world,³⁰ the *Rhetoric* attends to the way in which all speaking draws itself out of, and makes claims upon, the everyday.

But if the rhetorical is the speaking and interpreting of the everyday,³¹ it does not necessarily follow that the rhetorical is limited to the speaking of the Anyone³² or that the speaking of the Anyone is limited to the rhetorical. As in all Being and all speaking, fallenness is one of two basic directions of movement. A great many people have been moved to believe what

³⁰ Heidegger interprets πίστις, “proof,” as that which is capable of or conducive to cultivating πιστεύειν, a view, from out of a given concrete situation ([BCArP 78-81](#)). Proof speaks for the matter.

³¹ We should understand speaking and interpreting as co-implied rather than as separate processes. All speaking interprets, that is, in speaking one draws out meaning and significance from presence. In turn, interpretation speaks—in attending toward its interpretation of the world, Dasein is revealed to itself.

³² Rhetoric *does*, however, offer a vantage point particularly well-suited to observing the relationship between a regional public and the Anyone, how the way for some becomes the rule for all. We can also say the same for the relation a regional public to a particular, specialized way of interpreting (the philosophical, religious and scientific being but a few examples). Rhetoric accounts for the movement between from and to as it unfolds in possibility.

Anyone believes, see what Anyone sees and love what Anyone loves. A great many academic works have done the same. No way of speaking is exempt from idle talk.³³ Heidegger, however, does not have a particularly strong grasp of publicness. He places publicness and the Anyone in such close quarters that one runs into the other. The *Rhetoric*, however, suggests that everyday speaking is *regional*, that is, it speaks not to Anyone and Everyone, but rather to those who share a world of traffic and trade in everydayness.

The hearer in the *Rhetoric* is both *public* and *specific*. For the rhetorical speaking of the everyday, the hearer is not presumed to have a specialized foresight, but is also not Anyone. The hearers are instead assumed to be the sort of people we meet as we live our days—they are who we are with in the everyday. For Aristotle, the hearers are those we would come across in the agora as our business takes us to the *Heliaia*, *stoa*, or *bouleuterion* to deal with past, present or future matters. Together, we have a *there*, a shared place and time constituted in traffic and trade. If the rhetorical is the way of speaking *in public*, this public is not unlimited but regional. Aristotle observes that the greatness of Athens is more easily praised before Athenians than before Lacedaemonians. The *art*, Aristotle says, is in understanding the hearers and how they have come to attend to the changing matter in the course of living their lives, for it is the hearer who judges between what is and what is otherwise. Neither speaker nor matter determines the verdict. The speaker's comportment or view toward the matter is to be judged fitting or unfitting by the hearer in the moment (this is why neither *ethos* nor *logos* are separate from the act of

³³ Heidegger's examples of idle talk consistently mix the newspaper on the dining room table with talk in more supposedly serious settings, like the laboratory and the classroom. He saves his driest sarcasm for the academic conference:

For everything which must be done nowadays, there is a first a conference. One meets and meets, and everyone waits for someone else to tell him, and it doesn't really matter if it isn't said, for one has indeed spoken one's mind. [...] There are people nowadays who travel from one conference to another and are convinced in doing so that something is really happening and that they have accomplished something; whereas in reality they have shirked the labor and now seek refuge in idle talk for their helplessness, which they of course do not understand ([HCT 272-3](#)).

speaking). In the enthymeme, for example, the hearer actively participates in addressing the matter under discussion. Idle talk does not concern itself with the speaker, hearer or matter, while the *Rhetoric* places the hearer's encounter with the matter through speaking at the very center, as the one who must render an ultimate decision over that which could be otherwise.

That Aristotle calls human being a speaking-being, the sort of being that lives with others through speaking, tells us relatively little of importance if we do not know what he means by speaking. Heidegger contends that the *Rhetoric* addresses and in so doing reveals this concrete, factual speaking-being:

How, from Aristotle himself can we get the idea that this speaking-being was the basic phenomenon of Greek being-there and in what way it was? We are in a favourable position since we possess a *Rhetoric* of Aristotle's, which surveys the phenomena that are assigned to speaking ([BCArP 78](#)).

Because he deals here with *speaking* and not *language*, Aristotle attends to the situation in which speaking takes place rather than the word alone. Heidegger wishes to understand how Greeks *lived* in discourse, and the *Rhetoric* focuses on the speaking of Greek everydayness. The *Rhetoric* brings the agora's speech to life, and with it the hearers and their concerns. Now, Heidegger has in view the world that draws Plato and Aristotle to speak with others. As Aristotle drew proof for his interpretation of time from concrete experience in the *Physics*, so too does his *Rhetoric* direct analysis toward, and is built out of everyday Greek speaking. From here, as Smith points out, we can then see how these ways of talking found in everyday Greek speaking are taken into philosophical discourse, in essence moving from maxim to premise. As the maxim confirms what appears to be the case for one, gained through repetition or experience, is generally the case for all, the premise confirms that the necessary prevails in the particular. The conceptual aims to transcend the limits of everydayness, while the rhetorical rearticulates the

everyday. To hear the sound of historical Greek speaking, what they *say* rather than what we've come to say about Greek saying, Heidegger turns to the *Rhetoric*.

2.4.3 Breaking from intention and experience

In the early 1920's, Heidegger searches for speaking. Being is in time, that experience of time is as time-for, that time-for is initially and generally experienced as the temporality of everydayness, and that temporality—our dealing with changing time—is made manifest in speaking. In short, Dasein shows itself in the speaking of everydayness. Insofar as Heidegger is concerned with everydayness, he is concerned with rhetoric as a mode of speaking and the *Rhetoric* as the blueprint for recognizing, encountering and engaging in this speaking. If the everyday is elusive, the *Rhetoric* has pinned it down. The *Rhetoric* plays two important roles for the early Heidegger. First, the *Rhetoric* shows what Aristotle means by speaking by presenting an everyday account of Greek speech rather than a philosophy of language derived from speaking but held at remove. Second, the rhetorical hermeneutic of everyday speaking provides a grounding for Heidegger's challenge to philosophy in general, and a terminal point for phenomenological reduction that deviates from the traditional phenomenology of Husserl and Dilthey in particular.

The *Rhetoric*'s investigation of everyday speaking did more than simply illuminate Aristotelian ontology for Heidegger. The fundamental relationship of speaker, hearer and matter brought together in concern and dealt with in speaking over possibilities forms the backbone of *Being and Time*. Prior to 1924, Heidegger knows that Being dwells in speaking and hearing, but not *how* Being dwells. The *Rhetoric* gives an account of the how, and Heidegger uses this how to

blaze a new path in philosophy. By going back to the word in everydayness, Heidegger is able to go forward beyond Aristotle and challenge the foundations of phenomenology.

Prior to *Being and Time*, there were roughly three different ways to reduce human experience phenomenologically: to apperception, perception or cognition. Kant reduces to apperceptive structures necessary for one to be able to perceptively encounter and consciously evaluate the world—what is required for the world to appear as a world? In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant theorizes that the transcendent ordering form allowing for all sensible appearances are time and space ([181](#)). But, as we have seen above, time arises from, rather than precedes, concerned engagement. And time is not spatial—it is not merely a progression of “theres” sequentially laid out in a chronological line because “there” makes no sense outside of a context of doing. “There” always implies a “there-when-this-took/takes/will-take-place.”

If the apperceptive, the conditions that structure perception, cannot provide a framework to make sense of phenomena, then perhaps a focus on the perceptive itself provides more clarity. Heidegger says no. As a being that lives in and confronts its own being through language, Dasein’s very perception is guided by prior senses of meaningfulness and significance. We are given access to the world already before us in the language we use to mark what is here, what is relevant, what is necessary. Heidegger describes this process in plain terms in *Being and Time*—sight, sound etc, these things are not present to us as pure sensoria. We do not hear noise; we hear a motorcycle’s engine or a tap of rain on the windowpane ([BT 153](#)). The objects of perception are already present to us *as something*.

Finally, while the cognitive presents one with *a* way of interpreting the world, it is a way that is derived from previous acts of cognition—if we accept the terms of cognition, it’s cognizing all the way down. Cognize what and how? At best, we are left with something like

Rickert's "transcendental psychology" to gather together the cognitive and the concrete, but Rickert fails to grasp the concrete in any way that has not already been determined and validated by consciousness ([Heidegger, Diltthey 158](#); see also [BT 344](#)), that "it is more difficult to grapple with life than it is to deal with the world in terms of a system" ([Heidegger, PIE 127](#)).³⁴ Psychologism as a whole fails to explain the connection between the concretely empirical and the conceptually eidetic. The already present world, selected and articulated in terms of Dasein's undertakings, must undergird any attempt to then draw conclusions regarding these presences. We are already underway in a world that does not pause for deduction. Cognition cannot affix concern upon objects without already being directed toward those objects for the sake of something. Even the mind must be moved. Descartes' demand that all being be reduced to thinking is animated by "a concern [*Sorge*] for certainty and universal validity" ([Heidegger, CT1 83](#)). As Descartes writes in the *Discourse on Method*, "[L]ike a man who walks alone and in the shadows, I resolved to go so slowly and to use so much circumspection in all things that, if I never advanced but slightly, I would at least avoid falling" ([10](#)).

The solution is to end phenomenological reduction in the everyday. Heidegger declares Aristotle's *Rhetoric* "the fundamental hermeneutic of everydayness." For this point in Heidegger's intellectual career, the claim is bold. Everydayness is the way Dasein lives its day. Everydayness is Dasein's most primordial way of being, not in the sense of being prior to greater development, but that nothing precedes it. Reduction and division (*diarhesis*) go no further. We began the investigation of time with the simple guide of how we say there is time. Dasein is *primarily, initially* and *for the most part* in everydayness. To understand how Dasein interprets

³⁴ Heidegger comments in "Wilhelm Dilthey's Research and the Current Struggle for a Historical Worldview" that Rickert's split of history and natural science into individualizing and the generalizing is both "so obviously true that it cannot be challenged" and yet "so empty that nothing can be gleaned from it either" ([Heidegger, Diltthey 158](#)). Such a taxonomy cannot reach *how* the concrete and conceptual relate in the thing one researches, just *that* there are conceptual differences. And so we find ourselves in a loop between the object of cognition and the act of cognizing and with it, between the empirical and the eidetic ([LQT 69-71](#)). See also Friedman ([45](#)).

the world is to know how human beings are *as they are* and in turn the world *as it is for them*, in talking with one another in concern about the world. In everydayness, Dasein gives voice to existence at its most factual, concrete and worldly. The *Rhetoric* gives Heidegger access precisely to this sort of talk. Rhetoric is the expression of everydayness. Armed with everydayness, Heidegger can jettison more problematic concepts serving a similar purpose for phenomenologists: intentionality and lived experience. Why is it necessary to move beyond these two accounts for human interpretation of the surrounding world? At the risk of oversimplification, intentionality accounts for presence without time, and lived experience accounts for time without presence.

Husserlian intentionality seeks to explain how Being is directed toward the world in a particular way. Intentionality is a preliminary orienting or setting-up of the basic meaningful structures of the world. That towards which Being intends is selected from within a larger world or context that gives the intended meaning. “[A]ll thinking is a thinking *about* something, all willing is a willing *of* something, all experience is an experience *of* something” ([Heidegger, Dilthey 161](#)). However, this “bare and isolated directing-itself-toward” does not explain what *moves* Dasein ([Heidegger, HCT 303-4](#)). Misconstrued as bare motion without a for-the-sake-of,³⁵ Being intends outside of time ([Heidegger, HCT 303](#)). In the bare sense, intentionality directs without content or cause. Being intends, and in intending, the world is presented through categorial intuition as a world. Heidegger agrees with Husserl that Dasein is moved by a basic

³⁵ Heidegger makes this argument gingerly in *History of the Concept of Time*, without suggesting *who* misconstrued, but the charge is serious. The relationship of priority of time and intention splits Heidegger from Husserl. Heidegger claims in the “Dialogue” that he saw *Being and Time* as a friendly amendment to Husserlian intentionality rather than as a critique. His letter to Karl Jaspers on December 26, 1926 suggests the emphatic opposite:

If the treatise is written against anyone, it is against Husserl, who saw this immediately but stayed positive from the very beginning. What I am writing against, to be sure, only indirectly, is pseudophilosophy. What I am fighting for is the understanding of what we in philosophy can—and also must—only repeat as the central possibility. And that, I believe, one cannot make difficult enough ([HJC 73](#)).

orienting impulse—Dasein is drawn into the world in care—but warns that this basic movement must be understood within the context of time and doing within the world ([van Buren, “Endnotes” 201](#)). When I see the hammer-as-hammer, I do not intend the hammer as a bare object—it is a tool standing ready for my use that I find in the course of, say, making repairs around the house. The world of meaning implied by intentionality can only be fully articulated in the context of concerned engagement in time.

Why, toward what and how does Dasein intend? Prior to intentionality is temporality. Dasein’s existence in time gives intentionality meaningful movement in a “unified basic structure of being-ahead-of-itself-in-already-being-involved-in” ([Heidegger, HCT 304](#)). In the context of temporality, “bare” intentionality is enmeshed in human meaning and action—we are directed toward the world in our undertakings, and intentionality structures that encounter with the surrounding world in terms of those undertakings. This encounter with beings in terms of their temporal for-the-sake-of Heidegger calls in 1919 the “formal indication” [*formale Anzeige*] ([KNS 97](#)), and later “look” in the eidetic sense. Bare and isolated directing-itself-toward is replaced with the temporal movement of concern and care. Phenomenology can now begin to grapple with the questions *how* and *why* Dasein is moved. Dasein is directed toward the world in its undertakings, drawing from meanings made already available within the shared surrounding world in the context of a particular doing projected into the future. The “there is” of intentionality marks time and presence. The fundamental “there” of intentionality is in everydayness, its original hermeneutic and expression rhetorical. *Intending* meets *attending*.

In lived experience, we get the other side of the intentionality problem: the present taken as time rather than as *presence*. Dilthey’s work on lived experience raises the challenge of understanding history in the context of human life rather than approach human life in the context

of history (as points in a chronology). As Heidegger explains, Dilthey seeks to grasp the full givenness of life in history, to then pull loose its parts ([Heidegger, Dilthey 157](#)). Dilthey does not, however, understand the human being in the center of these experiences: “Dilthey managed to draw attention to certain structures in life, but he never formulated the question of the reality of life itself, namely, what is the sense of the being of our own Dasein?” ([Heidegger, Dilthey 162](#)) What does it mean for Dasein to *have* a history as a way of having time? A collage of pasts cannot tell us what is significant in the present or how it is so. Lived experience disappears into the cognitive structure of understanding and thus the given becomes subjugated to the process of giving. That is, lived experience acts as a sort of homemade categorizing system rather than a categorial intuition, but is a categorizing system all the same whereby the determination of being is made in consciousness rather than in the world.

Take, for example, Dilthey’s argument in “The Rise of Hermeneutics.” Dilthey praises Schleiermacher for refusing to split the interpretation of texts into “grammatical, historical, esthetic and material knowledge,” recognizing instead that all must be co-present in the interpretation: “These distinctions only reflect the fact that grammatical, historical, esthetic and material knowledge must be there if there is to be interpretation, and that they are able to influence it at every moment” ([Dilthey 244](#)). Up to this point, we are in agreement. Dilthey’s very next move, following Schleiermacher, is to set up a grammatico-psychological manifold through which the unity of a work can be expressed, and its general validity assessed:

But interpretation itself can only be resolved into the two aspects [grammatical and psychological—tr.] of the process of apprehending a spiritual act in linguistic signs. Grammatical exegesis works its way up through the text from individual connections to those larger relationships that dominate the whole. Psychological exegesis begins by a projection into the creative inner process, and proceeds onward to the outer and inner forms of the world, and beyond that to an intuition of its unity with the other works in the spiritual stance of its creator ([244](#)).

It is from grammatico-psychological (from word to mind) exegesis that the *logos*, for Dilthey, is finally revealed. The main purpose of this *logos*—its own teleological for-the-sake-of-which—is to “preserve the general validity of interpretation against the inroads of romantic caprice and skeptical subjectivity, and to give a theoretical justification for such validity, upon which all the certainty of historical knowledge is founded” (244). For Dasein, however, experiences are drawn into the context of the present in relation to undertakings—Dasein’s particular occupation or concern with things. Experience does not project grammatico-psychological intention onto the present to create a unity, “[r]ather things constantly step back into the referential totality or, more properly stated, in the immediacy of everyday occupation they never even first step out of it” (Heidegger, HCT 187). The unity is not a construct of the mind—it is already there to the hand, eye and ear, and we never first step outside. Dilthey is right to note that the world, and its interpretation, arise in a unity of grammatical, historical, aesthetic and material interaction, but his grammatical systematizing of language and his psychological systematizing of spirit leave us focused on talk about talk and not talk about things. Again the speaking of Being becomes a matter of logical procedure.

Lived experience cannot structure the present. Everydayness, however, provides the referential totality of time in the context of past, present and future as Dasein is concerned, moved and directed, in its occupation:

These primary phenomena of encounter: *reference, referential totality, the closed character of referential context, familiarity of the referential whole, things not stepping out of referential relations*, are of course seen only if the original phenomenological direction of vision is assumed and above all seen to its conclusion, which means letting the world be encountered in concern (Heidegger, HCT 187).

As we saw earlier, temporality accounts for this totality in significance (in-order-to), publicness (being with others), spannedness (movement of before and after) and datability (now-when).

Dasein, primarily, initially and for the most part encounters this world in the temporality of everydayness. Everydayness is the place where reduction ends. Phenomenology must grasp onto this full referential context, “placing oneself directly in the current and the continuity of access of the everyday preoccupations with things” ([HCT 187](#)). This access is through the speaking of the temporality of everyday, the rhetorical.³⁶

Heidegger writes in *Being and Time* that “philosophical research must for once decide what being belongs to language in general,” a grammatico-logical being or a being in everyday speaking ([Heidegger, BT 155](#)). Heidegger finds the answer to this question—what is speaking *qua* speaking?—in the *Rhetoric*. It is now time for us to see what that answer is.

³⁶ We could say that, in turning to the *Rhetoric*, Heidegger extends upon Dilthey. In “The Rise of Hermeneutics,” Dilthey notes (echoing Schleiermacher) that the Greek practice of rhetoric provided “a more solid foundation” for hermeneutics ([234](#)). Dilthey errs in seeing the *Rhetoric* as a purely literary matter, the text against which Dilthey contrasts context—“actual” lived experience. Heidegger identifies speaking in the *Rhetoric* as rooted directly in temporal, concrete concern, the properly historical speaking of life that Dilthey himself wished to hear.

3.0 SPEAKING TOWARD THINGS

We are lucky to have the Rhetoric, and not a philosophy of language.

([Heidegger, Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy, 70](#))

3.1 BEING FOR-THE-SAKE-OF

How are matters taken in shared time? Aristotle approaches rhetoric with an eye towards matters. Our speaking with one another speaks of things, and how they are in time. “Rhetoric is the counterpart of Dialectic,” the *Rhetoric* begins. “Both alike **are concerned with such things** as come, more or less within a general ken of all men and belong to no definite science” ([Aristotle, Rhet. 1345a1-3](#), emphasis added). Before beginning a survey of the *Rhetoric*, it would be helpful to remind ourselves of what Heidegger calls “the fate of Aristotelian research,” to avoid mistaking our speaking about matters to others for things themselves. Recall that the initial question opening Heidegger’s treatment of the *Rhetoric* is how philosophical speaking of the being of things becomes a matter of logical procedure. How, in other words, does our grasp upon things come to be determined by what these things are not? That which is here and now become a matter to be delineated using conceptual relations between genus and species, as though the word stood before the thing, outside and indifferent to temporality. I seek here not to reject the central importance of *speaking* of matters, but rather break from ontologies of speaking that

remove matters from the realm of factual, concrete human engagement with things (including things that hear, and things that speak, and things that matter) in time.

In chapter three, I investigate the *Rhetoric* as a work addressed to the being of matters encountered in the everyday, that articulates how the world exists for us here and now, initially, generally and for the most part in its projective, futural orientation. We will see how the *Rhetoric* shows toward what we aim when speaking rhetorically, how things come to be taken rhetorically, and how these things are present rhetorically for us. I will first describe the way in which Aristotle approaches rhetoric as a fundamentally time-based mode of speaking about things, specifically one concerned with things that change in time and thus with the pressing possibility of being-otherwise. I will then look to the doing of rhetorical speaking. How is the world made *present* in speaking with one another about something as *ethos*, *pathos* and *logos*? This speaking moves hearers to decision over things by presenting those things and their otherwiseness in light of the moment.³⁷

The *Rhetoric* lays out, in essence, an architecture of spoken presence, the structure of appearance of things in the now, taken in an everyday way. As we have seen in chapter [two](#), the now has a dual character: punctuated in a moment, extended outward into the before and after in continuity from one moment to the next. The *Rhetoric* describes how we have matters in the now, where continuity is maintained through familiarity and projected outwards in expectation, but also punctuated and made a matter of concern by the possibility of being-otherwise, not just for me in my time, but for us on ours. I argue that the rhetorical thing, as that which can be concretely and factually otherwise in shared time, displays the same temporal character as the

³⁷ I make a distinction between things and matters (roughly following the distinction between *pragmata/tinos* and *hypokeimena*), because not all things matter—or put positively, it is through matters that we encounter *things that matter*. We encounter things in the circle of our concerned engagement. A matter extends beyond the particular thing, encompassing the thing's origin, importance, and purpose in the context of shared time, traffic and trade—the matter temporalizes the thing. In speaking, we address a matter to ultimately render a decision about things and how they are.

now: the thing is present in its for-the-sake-of, or relation to that which is not yet, in its already-having-been, or relation to that which lies before, and its presence in speaking. Rhetorical speaking establishes the here and now in everydayness.

The three books of the *Rhetoric* address the ecstatic temporality of matters made present in speaking. The following chapter will deal with Book One, where Aristotle addresses the rhetorical thing in terms what it is for the sake of. The hearer must determine how a thing in the past, present or future has come to be of concern here and now, in light of how the matter was/is/will be taken in a futural sense (as to be advantageous for the city, as done with criminal intent, as being worthy of magnification in praise). In chapter [four](#), we will see how Book Two approaches the matter as it already stands before the hearer. The matter of rhetorical concern arises from and within everyday dealings already underway. The speaker then must understand how our prior affective, habituated and spoken attachments to things change the way we take those things to be: how the hearer *stands before* the matter in decision. If, in our futural direction, we project ourselves onto matters in the world, then in our disposition, habituation and common ways of speaking, we are moved *by* matters in the world. Finally, chapter [five](#) addresses Book Three, where we see how rhetorical matters are made present in speaking to one another. The speaker cannot display the matter in its past or futural directions without attending to the words themselves. Aristotle shows how we make rhetorical matters available in the now to others and shrink the distance between word and thing.

In sum, the rhetorical thing is that which arises and breaks from everyday existence, becoming possibly otherwise, and is brought before decision in speaking to one another. The rhetorical thing's capacity to change in time concerns us, and we address our concern toward the

thing in its possibilities: the thing as it is not yet and as it has already been are made present and pressing here and now in shared speaking and time.

By way of review, following the discussion of time in chapter [two](#), we want to approach matters in the context of the basic structures of all time—its spannedness, datability, publicness and significance as expressed in discourse—and Being’s motivated interaction with these matters as matters of concern in the everyday, toward which we pursue and from which recoil. Being in the everyday indicates a certain transparency or obviousness. We begin with matters taken at their most self-evident and immediate, made problematic as that which changes in time according to regular but not guaranteed repetition, encountered in the localized traffic and trade of life. These matters may follow with our speaking, but they may also stand outside or become otherwise. At best, our grasp is momentary and revisable. The most concrete, immediate and realest of real still slips away.

3.2 AIMING TOWARD A DECISION

Contemporary interpreters of Aristotle dispute the central focus of the *Rhetoric*. Is it, as per Garver ([192](#)) or Farrell ([10](#)) for example, the speaker and how the speaker takes up and displays the matter put before decision that brings a rhetorical speaking “into actuality?” Is it, per Langsdorf (“[Epistemology, Topology, Hermeneutics](#)” [174](#)), a question instead of the hearer’s relation to the speaker that “provides a bridge between the interests of the speaker/author and those of the listener/reader that is constructed by the former to influence the latter, but is only effective insofar as it responds to what is of issue to the latter” (and thus whose decision ultimately governs what that matter “of issue” is)? Either possibility moves along the path of the

word, as initiated in speaking and terminated in the hearer's act of decision and determinative of the matter and its doing, but what of the *matter taken up* in word, and the *things we call* rhetorical? In the traditional civic humanist celebrations of the speaking subject ([Garver 18-9](#)), the post-structural critiques of the centered subject ([Gaonkar 32](#)) and reclamations of the empowered hearer and decentered self ([Bizzell 22](#), [Langsdorf "Words of Others" 35](#)), the things with which we deal have gone missing. I begin my reading of the *Rhetoric* from the starting point of matters and how they are initially, generally and for the most part for us. The art of rhetoric is one of properly grasping the Being of rhetorical matters, how they are seen by speakers, and heard by hearers in their otherwiseness. In this moment of concern for the thing's capacity to be otherwise, the concrete is in danger of disappearing, the immediate can be obscured and the real not what it seems to be.

3.2.1 Rhetorical matters

Think about rhetorical ontology in terms of a triangle, with the three components of the phenomenon of speaking, speaker, hearer and matter ([Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1358a37-8](#)) each making up a point. Working in a Platonic vein, we can take the problem of rhetorical speaking as one of the speaker's proper positioning, so that the speaker can simultaneously see the matter as what it is,³⁸ and can guide the hearer to take up the same position.³⁹ Thus, in the *Phaedrus*, the measure

³⁸ "In considering the nature of anything, must we not consider first, whether that in respect to which we wish to be learned ourselves and to make others learned is simple or multiform, and then, if it is simple, enquire what power of acting it possesses, or of being acted upon, and by what, and if it has many forms, number them, and then see in the case of each form, as we did in the case of the simple nature, what its action is and how it is acted upon and by what" ([Plato, *Phaedrus* 270d](#))?

³⁹ As the doctor learns first the principles of medicine before being able to practice,
 "[t]he student of rhetoric must, accordingly, acquire a proper knowledge of these classes and then be able to follow them accurately with his senses when he sees them in the practical affairs of life; otherwise he can never have any profit from the lectures he may have heard. But when he has learned to tell what sort of man is influenced by what sort of speech, and is able, if he comes upon such a man, to recognize him and to convince himself that this is the man and this now actually

of rhetorical art “demand[s] discussion and high speculation about nature; for this loftiness of mind and effectiveness in all directions seem somehow to come from such pursuits” as well as determining,

what sort of man is influenced by what sort of speech, and is able, if he comes upon such a man, to recognize him and to convince himself that this is the man and this now actually before him is the nature spoken of in a certain lecture, to which he must now make a practical application of a certain kind of speech in a certain way to persuade his hearer to a certain action or belief ([Plato, *Phaedrus*. 269b-270a](#))

Note, the temporal definition of here and now is the province of the trained philosopher-rhetorician. In order to properly address the world as it lays itself out to us in speaking, the rhetorician must take up a very specific philosophical comportment, whereby the factual, concrete world, and those with us in that world, are understood by way of relation to the stable forms of consciousness. Once we as speakers know what the thing is, and what a soul is, we can move this soul here to see the thing properly. As discussed in chapter two in the context of phenomenological interpretations of time, an eidetic relation to interpreting the world—represented by Husserl—cannot get at how things are present before us in time, and must instead define those things by way of intention toward form, apprehended through categorial intuition. The world as it is present to us here and now takes a detour through consciousness.

before him is the nature spoken of in a certain lecture, to which he must now make a practical application of a certain kind of speech in a certain way to persuade his hearer to a certain action or belief—when he has acquired all this, and has added thereto a knowledge of the times for speaking and for keeping silence, and has also distinguished the favorable occasions for brief speech or pitiful speech or intensity and all the classes of speech which he has learned, then, and not till then, will his art be fully and completely finished; and if anyone who omits any of these points in his speaking or writing claims to speak by the rules of art, the one who disbelieves him is the better man ([Plato, *Phaedrus*, 217d-272b](#)).

The appearance of the particular thus is dependent upon the seeing of the *eidos*. It is important to note here that Aristotle counters with his own medical analogy: that even if we learn the general principles of medicine, we never act on a general body. In other words, we learn the principles of medicine generally ([Rhet. 1356b29-32](#)), but not its particular matter, because it does not *materialize* generally ([1355b10-3](#)). No principle can restore health entirely, but only insofar as the particular person here and now is capable of becoming healthier.

Working in a Sophistic vein,⁴⁰ the pivot point in the triadic relation between speaker, hearer and matter is that of the hearer. The speaker aims to move the hearer in such a way that the matter lays itself out before the hearer as the speaker intends. As Gorgias argues in the “Encomium of Helen,” persuasion is a *pharmakon*, a drug that affects the hearer’s basic capacity to grasp the matter:

The effect of speech upon the condition of the soul is comparable to the power of drugs over the nature of bodies. For just as different drugs dispel different secretions from the body, and some bring an end to disease and others to life, so also in the case of speeches, some distress, others delight, some cause fear, others make the hearers bold, and some drug and bewitch the soul with a kind of evil persuasion ([Gorgias 53](#)).

Here, we see the faltering of Dilthey’s sense of time, where experience becomes a psychological manifold—yet another categorical system—for encountering the matter in the here and now. The hearer is *before* the matter, and the matter a product of the hearer’s past and psychological disposition. The world has taken another consciousness detour. Plato’s intending speaker projects too far out over what is present, and Gorgias’ receptive hearer reflects too far backward before what is present. What is real, here and now is defined either through its attendance to forms of consciousness or forms of psyche; in both cases, the being of the matter is defined by what it is not. And for both Plato in the *Phaedrus* and Gorgias in the “Encomium,” we find the matter taken in word as an impression upon the soul, attending to how the soul is impressed, without mention of *what thing presses upon the soul* in the first place.

In the very first chapter of Book 1 of the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle rejects both the Platonic and the Sophistic positions—or perhaps more charitably, rejects portions of each and takes up others. The determination of everyday rhetorical matters is not carried out by the speaker’s active

⁴⁰ In discussing a Sophistic approach to rhetoric, I am limiting myself to Aristotle’s characterization. I do not think it is necessarily the only way to interpret the function or tenets of a Sophistic approach to rhetorical theory. My concern is with Aristotle’s configuration of the debate over the nature of rhetoric.

ordering intellect or the hearer's passive impressionable psyche. The determination must rise out of the matter as it is made present to us. The Sophist focuses on the judge, but not the things of which the judge decides ([1354a16-26](#)). The dialectician, left alone, relies too much upon logical structure and misses how the subject-matter may "differ from the syllogism of strict logic" ([1355a14](#)). Aristotle rejects speaking to the now in the exclusive terms of Platonic idealism (reality to the intellect) and Sophistic psychologism (reality to the psyche). Yet, in terms of what stands before one rhetorically, Aristotle accepts the Platonic drawing out of the general from the particular and Sophistic interpretation of ends as relative to situation.

Aristotle first subtly rejects the Platonic position by arguing that human beings speak of otherwiseness in different ways, dialectically and rhetorically, and that they are able to do both without the explicit guide of specific knowledge or habit ([1354a1-6](#)). One does not necessarily require a philosophical comportment to understand that the connection between our speaking and that of which it speaks is insecure and should be undertaken with care. One need not be a philosopher to be with things, nor a trained rhetorician to take matters as possibly-otherwise in shared time and thus requiring criticism and support, or speaking for and speaking against. Yet, that we can engage in such speaking without art does not lead us to conclude, as in Plato's *Gorgias*, that rhetorical speaking stands outside of art as a knack ([Plato, Gorgias 462c](#)). The challenge is to think about public matters of concern in such a way that we take all aspects of the phenomenon of speaking—speakers, hearers, matters—as themselves matters of concern in their very capacity to be, bringing matters of concern under the remit of care. In other words, the rhetorical art approaches the basic phenomenon of speaking, a totality of speaker, hearer and matter, itself as a thing that can be otherwise. We think and speak of things from matters out, and

as matters are capable of being otherwise, so are the speakers and hearers before which the matter stands.

How then does Aristotle answer the Sophistic position? Aristotle contends that by taking the art of rhetoric as one of positioning the hearer psychologically before the matter in such a way that the hearer believes the matter settled and self-obvious misunderstands the Being of rhetorical things ([1354b13-21](#)). The psychological thereby presents the thing as nothing more than the product of internal, subjective affective reaction or “frame of mind,” to be manipulated using compositional techniques in order to produce a consistent result ([1354b20](#)). The Sophist, Aristotle contends, misunderstands how rhetorical matters are: the hearer stands before a decision over a thing that can be otherwise. The hearer should, when asked to decide, encounter that matter as a choice to be made between possibilities rather than as the product of psychological necessity. Our disposition certainly influences how we decide between these differing possibilities, but it does not stand outside of matters, only “warping the carpenter’s rule before using it” ([1354a25](#)).

3.2.2 Things, matters and time

A matter’s otherwiseness is a function of its being in time: *what* matters here and now is that the thing with which we must deal can, from one moment to the next, change. The form of rhetorical speaking, the *eidos* or look of the matter that directs our interactions with things toward bringing about particular ends, is distinguished temporally in terms of our deciding over matters of past, present and future. Is it a thing that has been already and is no longer, thing present here and now with us or thing to be that is not yet? The relationship between the hearer and the matter is determined by the horizon of possibilities for the thing in time. The judge is involved in either

rendering a decision over what has been or initiating what is to be, while the spectator watches what unfolds before the eyes. In this way, the rhetorical *eidos* is derived from engagement in the speaking of things rather than by unchanging, abstract conceptual form.

Speaking, hearing and choosing do not happen in time alone, but take place within particular situations, and within these situations, it is more or less easy for the hearer to take the thing as open to possibility. Aristotle explains that prior teachers of rhetoric built theories of speaking from within judicial settings, where matters are presented in their already-having-been-done as specific, direct and immediate, before a large body of judges who may have strong personal, material and affective ties to the thing they must quickly judge ([1354a34-1354b27](#)). Under these conditions, the Sophistic emphasis on moving the hearer to take the matter as settled may be “accidentally” successful because the hearer, so closely entangled with the matter, is less open to seeing the matter in terms of uncertain possibilities: “so much influence by feelings of friendship or hatred or self-interest that they lose any clear vision of the truth and have their judgment obscured by pleasure or pain” ([1354b8-11](#)). The pre-judged thing is *insufficiently rhetorical*. The more obvious, unproblematic and unequivocal the thing seems, the less we grasp it in its rhetoricity. In the poorest judicial decisions regarding rhetorical matters, the hearer entirely cedes the role of judge to pre-judgment, taking the matter as already decided, and watches as a spectator entertained by idle talk ([1354b33-35](#)). We already know what *it is*, now let’s hear what *they say*. The matter has been cleaved from the word.

Aristotle contends that we need only look to other venues for rhetorical speaking to see where the Sophistic emphasis on moving the hearer fails. When we address matters in the future, as in the assembly, we have to speak generally and attend to different directions the future might take ([1354b25-33](#)). Thus the matter is encountered in such a way that its relevant aspect is the

capacity to be otherwise. Have we considered the possible situations over which our proposed law must preside? The matter is opened more to change in time, delimited by our shared familiarities and projections, interpreted in terms of probability but not ever fully foreclosed as necessity. If we could see every possibility and provide for each, the court and assembly would close their doors. We can only speak, hear, and decide in light of the moment. In speaking before the assembly, one takes the voice (and listens) as a citizen, a very specific kind of public persona emerging in relation to the state. The thing is relevant to both oneself and others who, in their everyday traffic and trade, are gathered together as citizens constituting the state. Finally, in political venues, decisions over matters of the future are rendered over a longer span of time, while fellow citizens consult over the decision, allowing the matter time to unfold in possibility.

Using Heidegger's four-fold structure of time worked out in chapter [two](#), we can see how the temporal and institutional differences between judicial and political speaking present the matter for decision in different ways. First, in terms of datability (being able to affix time to particular moments), the judicial aims at a clearly defined moment in the past when the thing was done, brought to decision at another particular moment in the present in a short period of time. These moments are localizable and definitive, lending to the matter a certain sense of solidity. Contrast to the political, which initiates in the present but must account for a multitude of possible future moments, opening up the matter rhetorically. In the judicial, the span between the time of the thing done and the moment of decision becomes less important—we are focused on that past happening in particular as a localizable moment ([1345b5-8](#)). The political must account for what happens within the span in order to establish the feasibility of its proposed end, explaining how we get from here to there. Given its rootedness in a particular concrete and localizable moment, the publicness of the judicially-determined past act takes place in the light

of a thick and complex network of social attachments, judged by a large number of people. In contrast, the publicness of political speaking aims to deal with a large possible public, but is negotiated and brought about by a smaller, more regional and inter-implicated public body. Finally, in its significance, the past act is concrete and directly relevant to the life of the judge, while the political ranges over possibility not simply for the individual representative, but for the larger body one represents. Structurally, then, these matters brought into speaking have differing senses of presentness, making judicial matters more easily taken as unequivocal and self-evident, whereas political matters are more easily—and properly—taken as open to otherwiseness.

There are two important observations to keep in mind regarding Aristotle's analysis of institutional practices and their effect upon the ability to grasp something as rhetorical. First, it is not the case that matters presented in their specificity to self-involved and atomized hearers deciding in a short period of time are *less* rhetorical. Rather, the situated institutional practices governing our speaking *matter to how things appear* to us. Some court practices make the matter more easily recognizable as setting up a choice over that which can be otherwise, and ward against pre-judgment by limiting how the matter is to be discussed ([1355a1](#)).

That Aristotle would spend so much of chapter one remarking on rules governing different judicial systems is then not so surprising. The court, the assembly, the marketplace: these are civic spaces that house speaking of changeable past, present and future matters that are specifically relevant to a public audience. That is not to say that rhetoricity is defined by those civic institutions or their particular historical practices—we would be left in the absurd position of saying that we did not speak of public matters in the past until there were courts, or matters of the future until there were assemblies, and that before the agora there was nothing present to speak of. Rather, these local, specific and temporally-situated institutions created in whole or in

part as *homes* for rhetorical matters act as *paradigmata*, guiding examples on which to loosely base our rhetorical theorizing. In their particular practices and norms of speaking, courts, assemblies and public squares are more or less capable of properly housing the rhetorical as a speaking of things that can be otherwise in shared time.

Second, Aristotle's argument also functions as a subtle rebuke of the Platonic position. Speaking rhetorically is not simply a problem of the attending to relations between speaker and hearer, guiding the soul through speaking, but also of the time and place before one in which the matter arises and speaking occurs. Speaking is always speaking here and now, about something, to someone. Dialectical speaking might be able to abstract the matter from its place in changing time in order to draw out what in it remains the same, and thereby may be judged according to unwavering principle, but rhetorical speaking cannot. To properly understand how a thing comes to appear one way or another, one must grasp the thing in the context of a matter, a concrete, factual social, historical and institutional situation.

To respond to Plato's *Gorgias*, judicial speaking never deals purely with the just, as political speaking never deals purely with the good, but with the relative justness and goodness *of things*. These things can be more or less just/good/honorable/true in the given situation, as expressed using different practices before a particular audience. Attempting to escape the concrete totality of rhetorical speaking forces us to ignore or denigrate its matters and judgment as somehow less-than-real, and puts us in the bizarre position of rejecting the most consistent, pervasive and immediate—most real reality—of human Being, in favor of an atemporal realm beyond human existence.

The eidetic Being of beings turns away from things as they appear in the context of dealing with matters of concern, and covers over how these things arise in the course of our

primary interaction with a world that includes those others with whom we speak, and the places in which we speak as a people. The determination of what something is here and now, for the eidetic, becomes a matter of logical procedure rather than concerned engagement, one of *dunamis* as a logical faculty or ability to engage in procedure, rather than *prohairesis* or choice to speak well of the matter under consideration ([1355b18-23](#)). The Sophistic position may fail to address political institutions in favor of judicial and epideictic, but the Platonic position fails to address all three because it does not properly handle things capable of being otherwise that change in shared time.

The dialectical and rhetorical, rather, work in tandem with one another. The two modes of speaking take things in time in different ways. For the rhetorical, the space of temporal relevance is expansive but particularly socio-historically located. It encompasses “almost any subject *presented to us*” ([1355b33](#), emphasis added). In other words, rhetorical speaking deals with the changeable as changeable in shared time—the changing of the matter is relevant to those who share in everyday life within a region of concern, who may or may not be familiar with dialectical argument:

The duty of rhetoric is to deal with such matters as we deliberate upon without arts or systems to guide us, in the hearing of persons who cannot take in at a glance a complicated argument, or follow long chains of reasoning. The subjects of our deliberation are such as seem to present us with alternative possibilities: about things that could not have been, and cannot now or in the future be, other than they are, nobody who takes them to be of this nature wastes his time in deliberation ([1357a1-7](#)).

The temporality of dialectic interaction, on the other hand, is determined by the participants, and can stretch out toward the unchanging amidst change. The ways in which both modes of speaking take the matters under concern are different. Dialectic skill is only helpful for rhetorical speaking to the extent that the dialectician understands how rhetorical matters appear to

collective audiences that cannot be known individually and cannot guarantee who, on any given day, stands in for the community as judge, member of the public, or representative.

3.2.3 Matters and choice

As the Sophist mishandles the ontology of the rhetorical thing, so too does the dialectician. The rhetorician is defined by his or her capacity to take the matter under discussion in terms of *prohairesis*, a choice between possibilities, rather than as a stable object of knowledge. “Most of the things about which we make decisions, and into which, therefore, we inquire, present us with alternative possibilities. For it is about our actions that we deliberate and inquire, and all our actions have a contingent character” ([1357a24-28](#)). We are, and find ourselves before, things that change in time in relation to our own engagement with them. The Sophistic position forecloses possibilities of being-otherwise by focusing on manipulating the hearer, and can do so regardless of how the matter should properly been brought into being through speaking. The dialectician may also take the matter as settled, but whether or not that taking has been correct is determined by logical procedure. For the dialectician, one’s initial grasp upon the matter is functionally irrelevant because that grasp is tested by and thus suborned to proper procedure. For the rhetorician, however, one’s initial grasp on the matter in its possible otherwiseness is central to the speaking itself, and the conclusion cannot be determined by logical procedure.

The Sophist, in Aristotle’s estimation, is problematic because the Sophist takes both the initial grasp and the logical procedure to be irrelevant (the “faculty” and “choice”), as speaking and the matter are suborned to the hearer’s state of mind. In terms of our Kantian dilemma, the dialectician solves the problem of grasping the Being of beings by subordinating beings to procedure. The Sophist ignores both aspects of definition and severs any connection between the

world and the word. Like the bad juror, the Sophist already knows what is, and thus attends only speaking. It is the task of the rhetorician to rebuild these connections, and attend to how our speaking about Being is rooted in our dealing with beings.

Both the Sophist and the dialectician lack a certain reflexiveness before the matter. Unless dialecticians accept that logical procedure cannot secure a rhetorical matter and make it self-evident before the public hearer, dialectical skills are not useful. And unless Sophists understand that the matter must be approached and presented as a choice, they persuade only under limited conditions and even then only by accident. Aristotle has made the case for why the matter, and the speaker's and hearer's positioning vis-à-vis the matter in the context of time, should be taken as the most important end for the rhetorical. The rhetorician places the matter that can be otherwise before the hearer in preparation for decision. And the art of rhetoric is the art of placing, so that the matter shows itself to the hearer in the form of choice between possibilities of being and otherwiseness.

Speaking initiates in the everyday. Aristotle's opening justification for the importance of rhetoric is grounded in basic human experience, in our everyday talk with one another and with "the things that come, more or less, within the general ken of all men and belong to no definite science" ([1354a1-2](#)). All human beings engage in both rhetorical and dialectical speaking in order to gain purchase in a changing world. We must be capable of examining and building from matters in a shared time and space amidst the claims of others, and we do so with or without reliance upon art to draw the word from the matter. Matters taken up in speaking may be taken according to rhetorical or dialectical temporalities, and those matters stand before that deals with them. If one takes a properly rhetorical matter in a dialectical way, it does not magically become

a dialectical matter, but instead in a very earthly way is only a rhetorical failure. We must build our way of seeing, our *theorien*, from views of matters.

3.2.4 Speaking of rhetorical matters with art

From matter, we move to art. If, as I have argued above, rhetorical matters are defined by the way they are to be taken in shared time, then the art of dealing with such a changeable matter should reflect this temporal condition. The method must fit to the material. Indeed, we find exactly such a temporal extension of before, present and after in Aristotle's definition of the art of rhetoric. The rhetorician sees the matter in its temporality, where each crucial aspect of speaking (speaker, hearer, matter) is brought into concern as that which could be otherwise ([1356a1-4](#)). The end toward which the rhetorician aims, that which stands before already in expectation, and the bringing of thing to presence here and now in speaking and hearing are all things that change in time and can be otherwise than they are.

First, the rhetorician has the ability to see. An art projects outward toward its end, through a basis in familiar technique, manifest and present in its material.⁴¹ The rhetorical is present to the rhetorician as an art insofar as one can see in the matter the possibilities presented before one as ends toward which we must strive. Second, there is a given case, the particular matter that stands before us, already underway. The possibilities present before the one who sees are only fully present in *this* here and now, as it has become. Third, we have what stands before one ready and publically available in this particular here and now as means of bringing the

⁴¹ Art projects to the end through the material when the craftsperson sees the herm (a carving of the god Hermes) as being-in-capacity in a block of wood, which the craftsperson then brings into being. ([Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 1017b](#); see also [Beere 375](#)). Note here the sly play of the craftsperson able to see into and interpret that wood as Hermes, who bears the tidings of the gods to human beings and from whom hermeneutics takes its name. We will return to this theme in chapter [six](#).

matter to light in a specific way. Like the dual character of the now, in speaking and bringing things into presence as otherwise extends into both the future and the past. The means we have to move the hearer toward a decision over a matter that can be otherwise are already there as available to this public here and now. The public is neither indifferent (unrelated to the matter) nor undifferentiated (related to the matter as a homogeneous mass), but concerned with the matter as it intersects with hearers' particular everyday lives. In Aristotle's very definition of rhetoric, we see the temporal ecstasies of everydayness for human Being in speaking with one another about the world—the hermeneutic of Dasein itself.

Everyday speaking establishes our now, our present and what is present here with us. As we have seen in chapter [two](#), that now has a dual visage—the now is present both in stability (time stretching out in continuity from the has been to the not yet) and change (this now here, which could be otherwise from moment to moment) What is made present to people in speaking in the now maintains this dual character as here in and for the moment, but stretched back into its past and forward into its future. The matters made present in such a temporal situation also have a dual character, as what could be and be otherwise. As I previously argued in chapter [two](#) with regard to the *Dissoi Logoi*, the conceptual categorical oppositions between good and bad, honorable and shameful, and truth and falsity when placed before the moment—the temporality of Being—*become the same* insofar as good/bad (etc) can be otherwise in the here and now before the hearer. I do not mean that good and bad become a vacuous, meaningless mass, but that the conceptual must be *realized* in shared time. It could be good or bad, or a relative span between the two, thus we ultimately must choose which is the case for this matter here and now.

For Aristotle, then, the art of rhetoric centers on proofs ([1345a24-25](#); [1355b36-40](#)). What is capable of standing in for things in speaking, or what puts a thing before the eyes, in such a

way that the thing is brought *to presence, in the present*? What, in other words, brings the matter before the hearer in such a way that the hearer can see and grasp the thing in its possibly-otherwiseness and decide for the moment?⁴² Asking what stands in and speaks for the matter makes our speaking insecure, and the relation of word to world no longer self-evident. The facts do not speak for themselves. The speaker's view of the matter in which the thing is involved is a problem. The hearer's capacity to hear the speaking of the matter is a problem. The way the words themselves are able take hold of the matter is a problem. The art of rhetoric, then, is one of understanding how things are taken up in speaking, and can take no part of the phenomenon of speaking for granted.

Things may still stand outside this becoming in the moment. In contrast to artistic proofs that can be brought about in speaking about the matter, there are the already-extant forms of past speaking toward matters of concern, in contracts, laws, testimony ([1355b37-39](#)). Yet, as Aristotle argues later with reference to speaking of things past in Book One, chapter 15 ([1375a22-1377b15](#)), the atechnic proofs may still be brought under the rule of rhetoricity—these things that stand in may have already spoken and determined, but not in a way that has settled the matter; the matter is still open. Laws, contracts, oaths and testimonies themselves must be judged in the light of time (as themselves things-past), and if found wanting before the moment or unable to hold up to the future, they can be abandoned.

⁴² The sensory metaphors (seeing, hearing, grasping) are intentionally mixed. Our senses have their own temporal ecstasies (after all, time is not an abstract concept but is *in* our sensory experience of the world). Seeing allows for projection over a limited, directed span and thus has a futural tendency. One can visually “lead” the moving thing and anticipate where it will be. Hearing establishes a surrounding world already under way. It alerts us that something outside of ourselves, even that which has not yet been taken as an object of attention, already shares our contemporary space. Touch establishes the very proximally-close, what is here-now in its physical and material condition ready for use. In sight we project out onto the world, in hearing the world projects back as we are in it, and in touch we trace the dividing line between the two. The now, taken aesthetically (or perhaps more properly *aisthetically*), still draws out of itself. The seeing-hearing-grasping person does none of these things in isolation, and in the same way both the speaker and the hearer see, hear, and grasp.

The rhetorician, then, takes a unique position toward the world and how that world is. Like the dialectician, the rhetorician plies his or her trade over a wide variety of matters. Like the scientist, the rhetorician does not deal with abstract principles but particular situations ([1355b35](#)). Yet unlike the scientist and dialectician, neither the rhetorician's general rule nor the particular matter are secure. Throughout the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle notes this strange tendency—the more specialized the view upon the thing, the less the rhetoricity, and the more rigid the rule of principle over determination of the thing, the less rhetoricity ([1358a8-9](#); [1358a25-7](#); [1359b12-17](#)). The first, taking the world epistemically, loses the sense of otherwiseness at the initial step of grasping the matter ([1395b24-27](#)). The scientist takes a matter as one of nature, as an unequivocal thing that is as it is regardless of time or observation. The second, taking the world philosophically, loses otherwiseness at the terminal step of making a claim about the thing, which is contingent and only loosely familiar to a general audience ([1357a11](#); [1357a35](#)). When making a claim to what “it is,” the rhetorician cannot take the “it” epistemically or the “is” philosophically. Rather, “it” is something that can be otherwise and our claim to its being (its-ness) is something that can be otherwise as well.

3.2.5 Speaking of matters in their temporality

What sort of general way of seeing, then, is capable of seeing that which can be otherwise in speaking to each other as it is present in the now? Claims and ways of reasoning must have in themselves a dual character, guided by familiarity but punctuated by contingency. Again, we see the dual visage of the now in rhetorical ontology. As that which is in shared time, the guides of both familiarity and difference arise out of shared basic commonplaces—those ways of speaking developed over a particular socio-historical place and time of traffic and trade. Rhetorical matters

are taken and dealt with in terms of tendencies, repeated observation, that something is generally the case.

We have already seen this sort of temporal being in chapter [two](#)'s discussion of the temporality of everydayness: that which is initially, generally and for the most part. Such a provisional partiality applies not simply to the matter itself, but to the entire phenomenon of speaking. The hearer too is one of whom we can draw rough general rule, as a member of a community that shares the same space, concerns, beliefs and experiences. The speaker's own art must remain contingent upon the changeable matter and hearer. What is initially—relations to things without recourse to additional specialized knowledge or experience, given to us in everyday experience made available by common, shared speaking. What is generally—that from these initial experiences we draw out broader consistencies of re-appearance, and in turn use these loose rules to familiarize ourselves with matters in terms of probability. As John Poulakos observes, “the orator, then, who understands that the limits of sociopolitical phenomena are furnished by their repetition and regularity, understands rhetorical probability” ([Poulakos 180](#)). What is for the most part—the positive possibility that what is familiar and general does not entirely adhere to or fully grasp the matter as it changes, and thus that our conclusions remain contingent ([1356b31-1357a8](#)).

The way we take rhetorical matters into word, as *logos*, must reflect such a partiality of particular things that cannot be pinned down and general rules that do not always apply. We are speaking of “what is in the main contingent” ([1357a15](#)). As argued above, if we take the thing as being a particular, specific way in and of itself, we leave the realm of rhetoric, and if we take the rule of principle too strictly, we also leave. By arguing for the example and the enthymeme as the two fundamental forms of rhetorical proving that can make the unknown more familiar,

Aristotle has presented what we can think of as the initial forms of scientific and philosophical modes of speaking, before either have solidified as practice and procedure.

How do we reason in an everyday way? First, we compare past concrete and specific matters to present changeable matters by way of example ([1357a25-28](#)). The past stands in loosely for the present, or what is better understood for what is not so well understood. The relationship is by way of analogy, “this is like that” rather than a systematic hierarchical logical or symbolic ordering of whole-to-part, or genus-to-species ([1357a28](#)). The analogic relationship may be better or worse, more or less relevant. Example, then, forms the basis for induction, and the refinement of induction would entail a refining of the procedure of analogy—in what way should the particular case (say, the particular person who is ill) relate to the whole (the illness in its scientific definition).

Second, we compare present changeable matters to shared general principle in enthymeme. The particular matter is measured by a given community’s general rule of thumb derived from and confirmed in everyday experience, with contingent conclusions drawn from contingent premises ([1357a28](#)). The refinement of deductive thinking, then, entails the refining of procedure of syllogistic thinking that properly relates the universal principle (what constitutes a state of “illness” as opposed to health) to the particular (should the present person be defined as ill).

As Smith ([56](#)) argues, we should take care here to not presume that the rhetorical is a sort of fallen speaking, but rather understand the rhetorical as the initial ground for the development of additional ways of taking matters in speaking. See how for both the scientific and the philosophical modes of speaking, the refinement of the speaking becomes a problem of procedure? The rhetorical cannot avail itself of procedural security, and yet still reasons. To use

the epistemic form of inductive logic, reasoning from particulars, one must already have the capacity to draw together particulars, like-to-like. To use the philosophical form of deductive logic, one must already have the capacity to determine particulars from generals. In order to avoid the problem of Aristotelian logic, we go back to that which lies before logic in *logos*.

Aristotle's discussion of enthymeme and example is important for a twofold reason. First, as just discussed, the *Rhetoric* shows how we reason, connecting world and world, in an initial, general and contingent way. Second, Aristotle uses these two basic modes of reasoning to theorize the *Rhetoric*. It is no philosophy. Aristotle typically begins with a host of examples taken from particular contemporary, immediate, small-ball commonalities of shared life, draws from them a general observation, and then puts that observation to work explaining possible horizons of otherwiseness of matters. He goes from particular, to general, back to particular again, now understood in terms of its concrete possibilities. In other words, to properly engage with rhetorical matters, Aristotle speaks like a rhetorician.

The three books of the *Rhetoric* speak to the three aspects of nowness or presence: First what is present is projected. In Book One, Aristotle deals with how we project upon the matter a for-the-sake-of, an aim, through which we then encounter things and speak about them. In Book Two, Aristotle deals with the present as it is for us already, as it is *before* us in disposition, habitual engagement, and in forms of common reason. And in Book Three, Aristotle addresses the now as spoken in the present, in sound, image and word. The matter encountered here and now, and the things with which the matter deals, arise from where we are going, where we come from and what we are making. Book One of the *Rhetoric* then begins with the end—with that toward which we aim, and the matter as for the sake of something. From the matter and its way of seeing, we now turn to its look, the *eide* of temporal rhetorical things.

3.3 MATTERS THAT CAN BE OTHERWISE IN TIME

3.3.1 Choices regarding matters in time

First, future matters lay themselves in their capacity to be otherwise regarding things that *can* be done or not done, and the question for the hearers is whether or not these things *should* be done ([1358b8-10](#)). It is important here, and throughout, to not confuse the thing done with pure action. In other words, we aren't concerned with doing, but doing *something*. Rhetoricians sometimes make the mistake of taking action as the end itself and not action toward things, undertakings of things, or doings of things. What lies before us as possibly otherwise, then, is the thing-to-be-done (this observation applies equally to things-having-been-done and things-present-here-now) that the hearer judges or observes. We judge and watch *things* ([1358b1](#)). We do not simply do things, but do things for the sake of something. The projected end toward which we aim, then, in future matters is that of the good, and we turn away from the bad ([1358b22-24](#)). Finally, we must be able to span the distance from the matter as it stands before us, and take the matter in terms of its feasibility—how we get from the moment of the decision to the good, or away from the bad ([1358b22-3](#)). To what extent are we capable of bringing about that toward which we aim, or of avoiding that away from which we turn?

Next, “concern with the past” ([1358b17](#)) addresses things as either having or not having-been-done. The hearers judge whether the thing was capable of being done by the one accused of doing so. How, in other words, has this matter come to be this way, and to what extent is someone culpable for it being so? In deciding, one aims toward justice as a decision over what should be, articulated by either explicit law or implicit custom, and the extent to which one is responsible for the matter being as it is here and now ([1358b24](#)). The question, then, that spans

the act and its aftermath that stands before the hearer is how this became as it is, and so the judge is concerned with how we have gotten to this point—this here and now—and how the accused relates to the thing-done ([1358b27](#)). To what extent does the matter here and now abide by what we think should be, and to what extent is the accused responsible for bringing the here and now about?

Finally, in present matters, as in the now, we take in the present as stretched out into past and future, “since all men praise or blame in view of the state of things existing at the time, though they often find it useful to recall the past and to make guesses at the future” ([1358b18](#)). The rhetorical, I have argued, speaks about matters as present as what might be otherwise. In the case of epideictic speaking, the very question is how we should take what is present into word ([1358b28](#)). Should we praise the thing or denigrate it? Is it worthy of our word? That which is taken into word in the present is done so not just so that people here and now might hear, but those beyond this moment in time. We speak in memory of, or in hope for something. And the matter is taken in significance as that which is worthy either of our praise or our condemnation as a contemporaneous community. To what extent is the matter here and now worthy of being taken up in speech in praise or condemnation, preserved in memory or projected in hope?

Note that in each case, the question is to what extent is the human being implicated in the world as it is? Can we make something so, have we made something so, how should we speak of the here and now? What is relevant in the matter is precisely our slippery and questionable purchase upon things in the world. Rhetorical matters bring everydayness, the otherwise unremarkable business of making the world easy to live in, to light; that which otherwise disappears unnoticed in the familiar, predominant patterns of daily dealings suddenly comes under scrutiny. Something is wrong—it has been made this way, it is being made this way, or it

will be this way. In each case, the thing is brought to presence in speaking: the thing in its was/is/will-be goodness or badness. In what way is the thing relevant to the changeable matter here and now, how can it be interpreted according to common ends, and how do we span that space between now what lies beyond it? Matters contour the significance of things in changing time. The rhetorical thing is one whose chief aspect of relevance to us, in speaking with one another, is its possible otherwiseness.

3.3.2 Being present here and now as possibly otherwise

If our concern is with presence, it must also be with the presence of otherwiseness. Rhetorical things are not to be determined using methods that foreclose contradiction—that the matter is, in an unequivocal way, absolutely as it appears. Rather, rhetorical things are taken in their contrariness, in terms of relative extent, probability, or magnitude ([1391b28-1392a1](#), [1392a8](#)). The question of relevance of the thing to the matter at hand is not answered by demarcating the matter and categorizing the thing, the genus and the species, but by context. From within a changeable matter, we then define the thing in a fuzzy way—is the thing better or worse, nearer or further, greater or lesser?

If the thing is being taken up without reference to the fully temporal matter's capacity to be otherwise in shared time, then that thing has not been understood in its everydayness but instead in a derived manner, for example as philosophical or scientific. In a derived mode of encounter, matter is present first as genus, first as species, as whole or predetermined part, as a proposition leading to propositions ([1356b15](#)) to be then judged in its here, now. It is no longer present as it is present initially, generally and for the most part; the thing's presence is established through procedure outside of time, in relation of like and like. Our most immediate,

familiar and prevailing here and now—what you the reader at this very moment are seeing, hearing and touching around you above and beyond the written word—becomes less real than what is derived from logic, formulae and recorded observation. We take the thing-said for the thing. Therein lies the fate of Aristotelian research.

Thusfar we have seen how Aristotle builds the *Rhetoric* from matters and how rhetorical matters differ in their capacity to be otherwise in shared time. From the grounding in otherwiseness, Aristotle then lays out the art of rhetoric as one that mirrors the temporal insecurity of its matter. Finally, each way of speaking is divided along the lines of having things-future, things-present and things-past in shared time as possibly otherwise, split into two basic directions of movement. What is relevant in the decision is precisely a thing's capacity to be otherwise in shared time. In order to become other than rhetorical, one requires a way to hold the thing still, either through dialectical form that holds through the general or through scientific investigation that holds through the particular. In either non-rhetorical case, the thing is one capable of being singly what it is without contradiction. Next, we will see how approaching matters rhetorically enables those matters to be taken in the present as otherwise, awaiting decision.

3.4 SPEAKING OF THINGS IN SHARED TIME

If one asks, “what can be otherwise in shared time,” the answer will be “anything and everything.” This unsatisfactory answer comes from an unsatisfactory question. Instead, Aristotle's treatment of how matters arise in different temporal situations responds to the question “*how* are things *possibly* otherwise in shared time?” We begin from concrete

experience, taking things as they appear to us in pursuit of the future, confronted in the present, and judged against the past, in the same way that we first investigated time in its concrete experience (as before-now-after). In what follows, I outline how each of these temporally-conditioned matters are taken by the hearer in such a way as to be otherwise than they are. For each temporal way of speaking, I will highlight first, how the thing is taken as otherwise in the moment, second, that moment's ecstasies (the ends toward which we are moved in decision; how it is in the present vis-à-vis past and future; how it is as already before us in shared sociality), and finally what this way of speaking then reflects back upon Being.

3.4.1 Speaking toward the future

As noted above, the *Rhetoric* traces out the human ability to change its world. For matters of the future, the question presented to hearers who must then decide is this: is this matter, this thing, something that is-to-be-done or is-not-to-be-done? The futural aim is tied to particular prevailing circumstances. Within the context of everyday life, and in this moment here and now, can the thing be done—is it possible ([1359a30-1359b1](#))? Between our aim toward the good and away from the bad, we then articulate the possibilities here and now for bringing that aim into being. Futural concerns are shaped by dual weighing—a two-foldness of Being and beings—between the good toward which we aim and the ability here and now to achieve that aim ([1359a37-1359b1](#)). The future, in this way, is read through the conditions of the present in terms of feasibility. We weigh feasibility with reference to what has come before, and thus in political argument we use examples from the past to guide our judgment of the present and its possibilities ([1368a29-30](#)). By drawing connections to past experience, the speaking in effect substantiates present possibilities—it can be this way or that, because in the past under similar

conditions, the following happened. Matters of political speaking (again, used as an example of speaking toward the future, not definitive of all futural speaking), aimed toward the future and what we wish to be or to have, are grounded in previous experience through example and brought to decision according to the conditions that prevail here and now. Things are in such a way that they are more or less probable to become something toward which we go, or away from which we recoil.

We can go toward or away from the world. What do we go toward, and from what do we turn away? In the present, the thing of political speaking is taken as “something-to-be-gone-toward,” or “something-to-be-turned-away-from” ([1360b4-6](#)). Happiness, that which we go toward, may be different for different people, Aristotle concedes. For some, it is having and choosing well, another independence, another pleasure, another bodily condition—and for all, securing these things against changing time. Aristotle begins with the immediate and general experience of most people: a long, healthy, happy, and pleasurable life, with many healthy and happy children, good friends and family, all possessions that we might need, and esteem from others in our community, especially if we esteem those people as well ([1360b19-31](#)). These good things make the struggle of living a shared world with others for a brief length of time easy and enjoyable. These things make our lives—in a very genuine sense—*worth* living, and in turn make us care for our own capacity to live. Finally happiness, as projective, makes the capacity to live well extend out more securely into an uncertain future.

The goods toward which we aim are not absolutely available to us always as they are, defined by abstract, rigid principle. We are in a world that changes. Contra Plato’s *Gorgias*, the business of political speaking is not absolute good, but what is better or worse for a given situation. The goods of everyday life extend in time (and hopefully, extend our own pleasurable

existence in time, as when we try to hold on to a moment of beauty), but these goods are also open to change. One's fortunes turn. We lose friends. Our bodies fail. Our children live their own lives and make their own decisions. Public opinion turns against us. The things toward which we aim in everyday life are rhetorical, which mean that they can be lost as much as gained. Happiness can be otherwise. We may aim for good and find bad. At best, rhetorically, we can only judge what is good for now, according to our situation relative to past involvement and future aims. As the doctor's general knowledge must apply to the particular body in better or worse health, so must general knowledge of the good apply to the here and now in better or worse possibilities.

Directed toward things that change in time, good and bad are interpreted temporally. In disposition, how we are moved to judge and choose something, we fear to lose the already-good and work to preserve it over time ([1362b2-4](#)). The good can be here and now. We enjoy its presence in shared space and time, and we desire to maintain our pleasurable time with that which is good as long as we can ([1362b6-9](#)). The toward-good promises something better than the present, in relative distance to where we are here and now, more or less in our grasp. Directed toward the future, a thing is good-for something or for the sake of something ([1362a33-34](#)). We can have goods as beginnings, goods in presence, goods as ends.

We determine relative goodness (and, for that matter, badness) in terms of presence to hand—the good for-the-sake-of something does not just extend endlessly and indifferently into the future, but toward concrete ends that are judged by their relative closeness and feasibility, aimed toward being of use for us to thrive and be happy. Our time is not our own—good also extended to those in one's shared time, toward friends and even enemies “[A]ll things are good which men deliberately choose to do; this will include [...] whatever may be bad for their

enemies or good for their friends, and at the same time practicable/possible [*dunata*]” ([1363a19-22](#)). Goods are closer or further, in ease or difficulty, to us here and now ([1363a23-24](#)). In each case, extended into the future, reflected back in the past or enjoyed in the present, the hearer judges the capacity to grasp the good in the light of the moment.

The good shows itself in shared time. Political matters bring together citizens to speak as a state, demarcating a region of shared time and concern. Aristotle describes the civic body in a way that is analogous to the individual constituents of happiness. As individuals wish to manage their business, get what they want, maintain themselves against vulnerability, propagate themselves, and attend to the expectations of others, so too does the state require maintenance, warfighting and defense capabilities, allies, a capacity to sustain itself physically and a constitution to give the civic body its form ([1359b19-22](#)). Political speaking projects everyday experience to a mass—but not unlimited—scale. The bases of knowledge for the political speaker, in other words, mirror the basic goods of the individual by projecting granular everyday experience upon the civic body as a whole. The concerns of political speaking deal with maintaining the state across changing times (ways and means), going after what the civic body wants and does not yet have (warfare), defending against the bad that may come against it (defense), distinguishing between friend and enemy (allies), regenerating and supporting itself from the present into the future (sustenance), and maintaining the health of the political body over the passage of time (constitution) ([1359b23-1360a35](#)).

As the good shows itself in shared time, so too do hearers hear not in the singular, but as part of a larger socio-political body. In the very form of the government, we see reflected back the stance of its people toward hierarchies of values, and with them, differing systems of valuing the rhetorical good. In other words, the form of government, the structure of the civic body,

presents a particular array of possibilities that the public presumes to be collective, political goods. The form of government manifests *which* matters *matter* to the people united in decision-making toward the future and capable of shaping the world, as “people choose in practice such actions as will lead to the realization of their ends” ([1365b33-4](#)). Democracies take as matters of concern those of the people who are enfranchised and thus constitute its civic body ([1365b32-33](#)). In oligarchy, the primary concern is toward matters of money, faced by and relevant to a relative few ([1365b33-4](#)). In aristocracy, matters of concern are interpreted with an eye toward the preservation and maintenance of social rank ([1365b34-5](#)). And in monarchy, the good of the monarch reigns supreme ([1365b39-1366a1](#)). The things gone after as good reflect back on the one who goes and why one goes—how one sees oneself as part of a political collective.

The pursuer and the thing-pursued stand in relation with one another. The good one pursues reveals the values and desires of pursuer, in both the everyday aims of individual who shares time and concerns with others, to the state itself as a particular assemblage of public time and concern. “We shall learn the qualities of governments in the same way we learn the qualities of individuals, since they are revealed in their deliberate acts of choice; and since these are determined by the end that inspires them” ([1366a13-6](#)). As the organization of the state reveals what the constituting public body of the state values, so too do we see the one who acts toward the world reflected in the things they act toward and how they take those things to be ([1366a8-16](#)). Democracy, oligarchy, aristocracy, monarchy—these are systems of governance organized around a central value against which the matter will be judged: what is good for the people? Good for the production of wealth? Good for the maintenance of rank? Good for protection of the monarch? We can see the contours of social desire and directions of movement in the very constitution of collective political bodies.

The decision over what we should pursue and recoil from is always drawn back and given in the now. The good must be good for the particular situation (the thing is judged good in light of the matter), and thus judgment in the moment deals with both the valuable *and* the feasible. The feasible delimits the range of value, determining from out of possibility what is probable: “what *can* be got is better than what cannot” ([1365a35](#)). The comparison of value and act in the moment reveals varying levels of commitment toward the desired in given situations —“the more a thing is desired, the better it is” in a relative sense in the situation ([1356a3](#)). Even when we draw major comparisons between goods or virtues, the ultimate verdict does not hold absolutely. We are uninterested in a philosophical colloquy on the comparative value of temperance or bravery, but the brave or temperate thing to be done, judged from the vantage of here and now ([1364b35-39](#)). Speaking toward the future illuminates the things that we go after, and the reasoning we use in pursuit, manifest in individual and social matters of concern, in their possibility to be otherwise before a decision in the here and now.

3.4.2 Speaking toward the present

So then, how do we speak of presentness if speaking *always* happens in the present? Things can be present in different ways. We should read Aristotle’s discussion of epideictic speaking as addressing both the speaking of present matters, and how each act of speaking presents things in the context of the matter. We must, as he writes, “know on what grounds” to praise and blame so that we might show ourselves to be trustworthy ([1366a32-3](#)). For example, epideictic speaking is concerned with virtue and vice, and also with the perceived virtuousness or viciousness of the speaker. For the speaker, too, is a thing that is present, a person whose own grasp upon the world is going to be judged by others in light of the present moment ([1366a25-23](#)). In the same way,

the epideictic deals with what is worthy of being spoken of with one another, and how we should do so, which in turn reveals how rhetorical things in general leap out of the everyday and become matters of concern, as things we speak about with one another.

Epideictic speaking takes as its aim matters of virtue and vice precisely in this reflective sense of desire, in how one's expression reveals something about the one who chooses or speaks about what is here and now. The virtuous person is judged by the way that person chooses the good, what and how they take a thing as good. As Aristotle says, we can see virtue in the doing and choosing—the things gone after, taken temporally in the past (the thing done), present (the virtue of the thing before us) and future (the aim toward which virtue strives): “it is evident that things productive of virtue are noble, as tending toward virtue; and also the effects of virtue, that is, the signs and its presence and the acts to which it leads” ([1366b25-28](#)). The vicious take the good for themselves without concern of others in their shared world, while the virtuous choose for themselves as they would choose before all—they choose both the desirable and praiseworthy at once ([1366a33-4](#)). The concern then, is how the present matter should be taken up in speaking, as that which is spoken-of-well, or that which is spoken-of-poorly, honored and praised or denigrated and blamed. The speaker is also a thing that can be otherwise, perhaps as one who in public chooses one way, but in private chooses another. The choice itself is opened up to public scrutiny. For the virtuous, the good is clear in what is here and now. The vicious sees a thing good for the individual but bad for the collective in the here and now and goes after it. The speaker, who stands present before the hearer, aims at being taken as someone capable of seeing, having experienced, and projecting toward the good not just for oneself but for all. The speaker must be judged as one able to see, hear and grasp in the matter what is good, what is bad, and choose accordingly.

Speaking toward the now aims at virtue, which provides and preserves the good ([1366a36-7](#)). The now, interpreted in terms of virtue, stretches both forward and back. In provision, virtue goes after and secures that which it does not have, and in preservation, virtue maintains that which it already has against changing time. What in the present here with us is capable of generating and preserving the good? Both provision and preservation are brought into the now in terms of what is ready-to-hand and available for our pursuit and preservation of good. The virtuous person is not simply capable of determining the good, but of grasping and taking it up in the now. Rather than being concerned entirely with the matter, we see the person in light of their dealings with matters, in terms of what one chooses to value and how one does so.

Speaking toward the now initially posits the very possibility of sharing a world at all—that what is here as relevant for me, is so for others as well. What is good in itself *and* worthy of praise ([1366a34](#))? In the shared here and now, matters initially arise as being worthy of collective concern. The examples that bolster our projections toward the future and support general observations that guide our assessment of the past do not materialize out of air. These grounds are formed in the course of observing things: events to be remembered as examples and old wisdom reaffirmed in light of the current situation, invested with “dignity and nobility” ([1368a29](#)).

In speaking toward the present, we work out what things are important for those of us gathered in a here and now. The hearer takes the position of observer—but does not observe bare things or indifferent objects. The hearer observes things as great and small, as deserving to be called good or to be reviled both now and in the future in collective memory, and things that should be forgotten and vanish from collective concern, even while they stand in our midst. From the here and now, we then observe the possibilities present to us in past and future. What

has been may be reassessed in light of this day. What will be can be considered in terms of what we can see in the present.

As seen above in the discussion of deliberative speaking, speaking to the future gauges the human capacity to collectively shape the world and bring about a desired end. And as we will see below, speaking to the past measures out the extent to which the matter that has come to be did so as a result of human choice. In the now, the present is manifest in terms of the things within it, what they have become or will be, their relative closeness or remove to hand, and their variable importance to us in the moment and productive of good. The observing of the present then involves not just seeing what is present here and now, but which of these things *matters* to us.

The present is not present entirely in all of its possibilities all at once, but according to which of those possibilities, in the things important and thus relevant to us as present, is good for the moment. These relevant matters of concern are judged by past and future, in terms of the magnitude of pressing presence—what is required, desired, and remembered, what is superfluous, despised and forgotten. Right now things surround you, and at this moment very few of them matter. Speaking toward the now reveals in its moment what parts of this world are worth taking into words. Something might be present as small, meaningless, unimportant, ephemeral, another as large, defining, crucial, lasting. What is worth going after here? What is worth keeping? And what is worth letting go, tossing out and forgetting?

Addressing what is here and now means not here and now for the speaker as an individual, but what is here and now in *shared* time. The now is a public now, one that we are seeing, hearing and grasping together. In that now, the speaker is a thing that is present to others, that could be otherwise and changes in time. Of relevance to the hearer is the speaker's capacity

to properly grasp *how* things are here and now. Is the speaker motivated by what is good, and when faced with this matter, can they recognize the good and bring it about? Does the speaker take the hearers as things that are good? Virtue itself is defined in relation to publicness. The virtuous person goes after the good, even when no one is watching. The virtue, then, of the speaker is possibly otherwise precisely because the speaker is, here and now, being watched. Ultimately, the very best of our knowledge of the Being of other beings can only judge how that being seems to be. I cannot know for certain how you would deal with matter if you were alone. From what I see now, I can at best guess at what you would be if I were not watching. Taken rhetorically, the speaker remains a matter of opinion.

Let me take this opportunity to address a strange claim made by Aristotle regarding the *ethos* of the speaker. The judgment of character does not come from prior knowledge of that person, but from the act of speaking itself ([1356a5](#)). At first blush this seems impossible. Surely, because the hearer is a public-hearer, speakers cannot guarantee that they have come before the eyes of each person in the past, or that hearers have knowledge or pre-judgments of the speaker. It seems to beggar belief, however, that the matters arising in the course of our everyday traffic and trade with one another, conditioned by past experience and projected intentions, enmeshed in a thick network of social attachments and borne in shared speaking—matters of intense shared and localized concern—could be spoken by someone taken as a blank slate. Rather, I would suggest Aristotle means that all of these past and projected attachments are taken in the context of that moment in speaking. Neither past nor projection can speak for one. Who you are—and you may be the subject of much judgment, under watch of many eyes for a long time—is still judged in the course of your addressing *this* matter in *this* moment, now.

We can see, then, how addressing the speaking of present matters rhetorically reveals matters raised from the business of everydayness to a concern for shared life. As shown in chapter two, the speaking of everydayness is the speaking of the present—it is drawn from and addressed to the now. Rhetorical speaking deals with the future and past, but it is addressed to those who are here and now. Though the matters with which judicial, deliberative and epideictic speaking deal may differ temporally, the speaking itself is always done *in the now*, establishing the shared gathering of speaker, hearer and matter in a world with one another. Speaking in the now, then, reveals to us the speaker as one whose comportment toward the world is displayed in their pursuit of good, in the matter presented as worthy of collective concern in speaking, and a hearer who stands in judgment of the word's fit to the matter. In virtue, our estimation of how others see what is here and now, we see how the speaker is a thing that is present in the here and now.

Speaking to what is here, now unveils what is worthy of being spoken of at all. In the present world of things, some things should be brought into the realm of collective attention, while others are left out. The act of speaking is itself of concern—both the things selected and the way they are brought into word *matters*. How is this thing to be spoken of, as reviled or cheered? How is it to be remembered and taken as hope? Those things worthy of praise make shared life easier to bear: connections with others society, the fair order of law, reaching out to friends, the spectacle and promise of wealth and beauty, and wisdom in deciding over public matters ([1366a3-23](#)). Does the matter present before us here and now make us better than we are, or does it help us live up to what we have been? Arrayed outward in hope of what we wish to be, and memory of what we have been before, what is present arises as a matter of social concern in

terms of its being more or less important—pressing or necessary for the moment—and in extent as better or worse.

Virtue's strange double movement, as that which one chooses outside of the view of others, but judged within the view of others, illustrates the length to which we are not simply capable of shaping what is to be, or responsible for what has been, but do so in the presence of others and measured by others. Here, Being is revealed in the way one is seen to be relating to things in the world. How are we to be seen—how does one present themselves? Dasein, as a being in the world, is seen relating to things. Who then judges, and how do they judge? What is seen, and how is it seen? Each change in region; Athenians esteem different things than do Scythians, Spartans or—for that matter—philosophers ([1367b7-11](#)). We need look no further than the goods of virtue, which have already outlined what is worthy of praising, raising up and idealizing in presence. We, as beings who live together, value the observation of custom both as informal social expectation and explicit law, and judge the presence of others physically in the body, by way of our more intimate and particular social connections such as our friends and family, and the extent to which our own possessions are also able to be shared by others. As that which is present, the valued is present both in its simple spectacle (the speaking as something that appears to eye and ear) and its relevance and significance for shared business and doing (its use to hand). Aristotle quotes Sappho:

If for things good and noble thou wert yearning
If to speak baseness were thy tongue not burning
No load of shame would on thine eyelids weigh;
What thou with honor wishest thou wouldst say. ([1367a11-14](#))

One's shame before others is rooted and revealed in the shameful things one desires. What is most important in Heidegger's interaction with the *Rhetoric* is this explanation of the speaker—for Heidegger, Dasein itself, findings itself as just one more kind of things that can be otherwise,

seen and judged by others. The actor becomes suborned by the world in which they themselves are implicated.

We find in the aims of virtue then a negotiation of one's own good with the larger shared and public good determined by the hearers in the moment. Who's good—yours or ours ([1367a1-7](#))? In the desired good, the virtuous good, we see what the given people in a shared socio-historical region will show one another openly without fear ([1367a15-16](#)). Speaker and hearer are both before one another's ear in word, and eye in look, dress and comportment; Aristotle even describes a speaker's character as needing to "look right" ([1377b26-30](#)). In epideictic speaking, we both show what is in this moment, here and now, worthy of being taken up and borne into history, or worthy of concern and consideration, and through our choices of the good and bad, our own presumptions and systems of social valuation. "[W]henver you want to praise anyone, think what you would urge people to do; and when you want to urge the doing of anything, think what you would praise a man for having done" ([1368a7-8](#)). It is both what we see and how we wish to be seen. We show how we are present as a public in what we go after and value, in terms of our own interest and in how we conduct ourselves before others. In Heideggerian terms, Dasein is not simply an actor amongst things, but amongst beings, and is a thing before those other beings. Dasein is a being that recognizes itself in history (as responsible for having brought things about), in intention (as bringing things about), and being here and now, present before the eyes and judgment of other beings sharing its time.

Secondly, the very contours of presence itself, of how things matter in the moment, are revealed in the speaking of the present. Presence is not absolute or fully and unequivocally given to us all at once. Things are present to greater or lesser extents. Thus, in the speaking of things present, we find what is *worthy of being spoken of, of being rhetorical* at all. Some things matter

as rhetorical matters and others are too unimportant to merit concern. The first of something, the better, the right thing at the right moment, the consistently successful and the unexpectedly excellent, all heightened against the background of normal, prevailing everydayness ([1368a10-19](#)) The present is, in this way, present in concern in terms of magnitude, and is open to observation before both ourselves and others. Rhetorical presence of things marks those things as more or less worthy of collective concern.

3.4.3 Speaking toward the past

Finally, we turn to the thing done in the past, judged in the light of the present. When determining guilt or innocence, we judge the thing-done against law or other social expectation. If the futural orientation of Being asks to what extent we are capable of making things otherwise than they are, and the present orientation asks what things we take up as desirable, useful and valuable, the past orientation asks to what extent things in the now are the product of human action, within the remit of human temporality, care and concern, and to what extent they have been brought about by factors beyond our control or awareness ([1368b36-1369a2](#)). As the future is open to concrete possibilities of change, so to has been the past, leading up to this moment. We judge the act against a collective rule of law, which can be interpreted narrowly as the law of the state, or more broadly as individual or socio-cultural expectation ([1368b6-9](#)).

How have we gotten to where we are here and now? Speaking toward the past addresses simultaneously things as they are now for us and as they appeared to be at the time the things were done. Did the accused mistake the bad for the good or misunderstand the law? Was the thing done intentional or accidental? In this way, we work out how the past was present as thing that could be otherwise than it was—how the past stood before a choice ([1368b10](#)). Our present

moment is not necessary, natural or inevitable product of the march of time, but has been brought into being by particular things done at particular moments.

We then determine how to address the problem—the thing that should not be as it is—in the present and renew our shared sense of social expectation.⁴³ As discussed earlier in the chapter, judgments of things-done are different from those of things-to-be-done. The past judgment speaks to a particular moment, a particular action or situation and a particular community, rather than in the general and open-ended terms of futural decisions, yet it does so by approaching past acts in their horizon of possibility in the moment of acting—how did the future lie open to one at the time, and what things are people “trying to get or avoid” ([1368b28](#))? From here, the hearer is able to judge then the transgression’s level of severity for both the individual and for the community.

The end toward which speaking of the past aims, then, is a decision between guilt and innocence. We should note here that the question is not simply was a thing done, but rather the relative extent to which the thing-done was both capable of and responsible for bringing our current situation into being. The decision projects from the present (how we are now) to the past (how it became this way and who bears responsibility) to then aim towards a decision (what should we do). Responsibility is interpreted according to temporality as well—was one capable of seeing this moment now, to what consequences the choice would lead, when making that choice in the past? One bears responsibility insofar as one was capable of seeing what possibilities lay open for the thing-done. In a voluntary act, one is able to see the choice one

⁴³ I use “social expectation” to loosely translate *nomos* in order to emphasize both the public and collective sense of the rule of *nomos* as well the way in which *nomos* precedes judgment of the moment. Aristotle approaches social regulations and conventions in both their written and unwritten forms, and so I want to avoid evoking the heavily formal legal connotations of “law.” I also do not use “convention,” because the term is too static. “Social expectation” explains how a convention *makes-conventional*, that is, how particular norms, values, practices, repeated shared experiences, and beliefs guide our interpretations of the present. “Expectation” captures the active, particular sense of *nomos* in time. An expectation is a presumption one uses to interpret the present moment, and the way things are or should be in that moment.

makes, and possible outcomes of such a decision in shared time and in shared social expectation ([1368b10](#)). On the other hand, the thing-done may be done out of ignorance of what might happen afterward, or what the expectations are in a particular shared place and time. One may be forced by others to do the thing, and in that one had no choice, one also bears no responsibility [1369a31-1369b18](#)).

The thing done may be judged according to the doer's understanding and capability at *the* time, but it is also judged according to the unfolding of possibility in *shared* time. Time is shared by more than other people—it is shared with a myriad of things extending outside of our own control. The very best of human reason may be betrayed by changing time and become foolishness. Human capabilities and responsibilities are limited; they do not extend everywhere and always, but instead take place under certain circumstances, and are located in between the poles of necessity and pure chance ([1369a31-1369b2](#)). In the necessity of nature, the thing-done always already would have happened, and the present moment is as it always already would be. It cannot be otherwise than it is. In chance, rather than being straight-jacketed by the world, the thing-done is too prone to change and unpredictability. For either, the horizons that should open up to choice are foreclosed, by a time that progresses exactly as it shows itself to be without change, or change that cannot be foreseen and judged. In necessity, there is no present moment, just an expanse and extension backwards and forwards; time exists as continuity but without punctuation in the moment. In chance, all we have are moments, here and then gone, so chaotic and unordered that one cannot properly project into the future because it has no foundation in the past or ability to meaningfully engage in the present. In necessity, time is all sameness, in chance other and other.

Speaking toward the past maps out the shared realm of everydayness against the borders of necessity and chance. To what extent do *we matter* in making the world as it is, and as we believe it should be? It is only by taking the world as it appears in choice that one can provisionally project, even then without certainty, and only in choice that one can be responsible for the outcomes of the things-done. We cannot know the future as a necessity, and we are powerless to bring about that which happens by chance. In that choice in the moment, one seeks to go after what makes one's living easy and recoils from that which makes Being difficult ([1369b33-35](#)). Choice toward things weighs the needs of one's self against the expectations of the shared community, testing the hold of one against the other. The choice, in which the bad thing appeared good, reveals one's network of desire, social attachment and reasoning: Dasein's everyday world in shared time, as expectations that can be either fulfilled or dashed ([1369b20-27](#)).

In judging the thing done, one judges time. We reconstruct how something has come to be. From our position here and now, the decision is over how we believe the thing-done was present to the doer at the time. The thing-done is present in two ways: first, in how the thing stood at the time, and second in how the doer made a decision about that thing. How, in other words, was something in the past then present in its horizontal future possibilities at the time, "since anything pleasant is either present and perceived, past and remembered or future and expected" ([1370a33-35](#))? In judging the thing done, the judge must consider the thing in its full ecstatic temporality. Here, in this judgment, the human being confronts its ability to bring things about in the world, juxtaposed against chance (too chaotic to be taken as temporal in any meaningful way), nature (the happening is so regular as to be outside our intervention) and

compulsion (the human capacity to interact with the world restricted by other beings with whom one shares that world).

If indeed the thing-done was present as a choice, and when given a choice one goes toward the good, we must then ask how one came to take the socially bad thing that goes against social expectation, in law or custom, as nevertheless in some way *good*. Why did you not see the thing as you should have, and as we see it now? The choice itself took place in time. First, in terms of the past, one is disposed or has come to see the thing in a way that opposes social expectation. In the most immediate sense, the choice may be driven by sheer physical appetite: the human being, after all, is a living creature first who hungers, thirsts and lusts ([1370a20-25](#)). One may encounter the thing as an object of desire, where one pursues the presence of the thing without giving heed to the judgment of others ([1370a25-28](#)). One may also take the matter as grounded in past experience and habit, in a misrecognition affirmed and maintained in one's repeated doing in the world—thus if one has been able to do wrong in the past, one expects that this thing done here and now is no great evil ([1369b7-8](#)). Finally, one may be able to project into the future through reasoning what will happen if one does the bad thing, and may nevertheless misjudge ([1369b8-11](#)).

In the face of appetite, desire, habit and reason, the presence of the thing as good or bad is taken in terms of one's dealing in time. The immediately good may be so much so, or in such great need, that the later consequences for contravening social expectation have less influence in how one takes the thing to be: "you have nothing to lose" ([1372a36-7](#)). The short-term good outweighs the long-term bad. In habit, one recognizes the possibility of a negative outcome, but past experience shows that it need not turn out this way. Projecting outward in reasoning, we may judge well, but we may also judge poorly. We understand and misunderstand, judge and

misjudge. The hearer who judges the justice of the thing-done moves from the now before a decision, to the temporal situation of the thing-done in its own present, and then toward a decision to be made over what should be. The hearer, in other words, moves from what is to what was to what should be.

Speaking toward the past traces out the relationship between the individual and community in social expectation—the judgment of others that comes before us and shapes how we understand the world and our relationship to it (and to others in that world). The matter becomes relevant as rhetorical, jumps out of the fabric of everyday life, because something has become other than it should be. Something has broken with expectation, and there has been injury. Now, the world diverges from expectation all the time. Traffic is bad. You forgot your keys. The appointment was canceled. The broken expectation, then, must be one worthy of being called to the attention of others, and uncertain enough to require outside judgment. We see in the choice of legal concerns a sort of economy of social attachments, not just between the doer and the thing-done, but also between the doer and those whose expectations the thing-done violates. The far away, the relatively powerless, the reviled—people whose share in our world is less than others, and whose expectations matter little—have less claim on what the world should be ([1372b23-1373a27](#)). It is not so bad to do badly by some people, and is even good to treat badly those who have wronged ourselves or others ([1373a9-16](#)).

Yet if there are some who are excluded from social concern and whose own expectations are not to be honored, there are others who may be wrongly excluded and whose exclusion reveals a failure of our social expectations. Aristotle argues that claims to equality expand our circle of concern, worked out in our everyday traffic and trade, and call into question whether our legal or customary expectations are themselves just to all ([1373b3-11](#)). For example, when

Antigone honors the expectations of the gods over Creon's law, she expands the circle of concern from Creon's earthly collective state, to divine judgment over all humanity. Thus does she bring the desecration of Polynieces' corpse, literally thrown beyond the limit of concern for the state outside the city walls, back into the circle of social concern as violation of divine expectation. In claims to equity, which extend beyond the community's particular laws to a person or thing not currently considered, where our best attempts at deliberation could not hold up to the situation ([1373a26-32](#)). Our judgments of one another are themselves judged.

The relationship between the thing done and its possible contravention of social expectation is temporal, based on the way one is disposed toward the other and the act, the end toward which one aims, and one's capacity to bring it about. One must be disposed in such a way as to desire the thing over and against the expectation—you have to be moved to see the thing wrongly ([1373b36](#)). The thing must be present at hand in such a way that it is feasible to do wrong against another capable of being harmed. And one must project the thing's possibilities in such a way that either punishment is likely not a concern, or that the threat of punishment is less important than the presence of the thing. How, in other words, had one's disposition and projection made this bad thing present as good?

The thing-done reveals, then, a choice between desire and social expectation, what we go after, and what stands before us. The desire may be overwhelming, the need in the moment great, the recourse for the victim limited, the act hidden or far from the judgment of others, or the cost of violating slight. We also see, in the choice of matters of concern, the expectations and desires of the community. The matters of concern mark moments of disruption in social life that *have become* a problem for we who share a time and place, an everyday region of concern, and of

those problems, which were criminal acts, and which were forgivable errors or unexpected misfortunes ([1374a5-10](#)).

In the moment of judgment put before the hearer, we find ourselves—in our capacity and responsibility for bringing the present about as it is, as things that are desired and loved, as who we are in what we desire from others in terms of friendship or honor, and how we have others as means, for the sake of something. The criminal act, held up for censure and punishment for its violation of individual and community expectation, can also be balanced against a willingness to forgo punishment:

Equity bids us to be merciful to the weakness of human nature; to think less about the laws than about the man who framed them, and less about what he said than about what he meant; not to consider the actions of the accused so much as his intentions; nor this or that detail so much as the whole story; to ask not what a man is now but what he has always or usually been ([1374b11-16](#)).

In claims to equity, then, the matter expands and provides new relations to the thing-done in question. Desire, wonder, and learning all draw us outward to understand the world beyond, determined and limited proximally in our dealings, watched by others and regulated by the rule of others.

Judging the thing-done shows what lies before us in *nomos*—how the world is for us already in expectation, and how we take then the thing, in such a way that we either bend and acquiesce to expectation or go against that expectation in light of that present moment. How far do each of us extend into the world, filled with things and other beings existing together in shared time? Both acquiescence and opposition occur to certain degrees. One may generally reject expectation but judge opposition to be disadvantageous in the moment, and in the other direction, one may value social expectation generally but face a moment in which it is better to break against others. In both cases, the thing-done is judged in the here and now, narrowly or

broadly. In our desires, we ourselves are revealed in what we go after, and our level of attachment to the claims and expectations of others. In what we desire, what we seek to learn, what we take in wonder, and pursue for benefit, in the *things* that are done, we reveal ourselves as doers.

From the aims that guide speaking of things-to-be-done, things-here-now, and things-that-have-been-done, the *Rhetoric* then turns to what comes before the speaking itself. The transition between books one and two presents an opportunity to appreciate how the *Rhetoric*'s intricate arrangement illuminates the relationship between Being and beings. In short, the three books break down how things are present in a now in aim, expectation and manifestation in speaking (the ontology of speaking), and within each of the three books, the things-spoken-about are approached in terms of their own situated temporality (beings that are spoken). We then move from how things are as aims—their for-the-sake-of—to how things are already before us what we expect of the world, and how those expectations are either confirmed or subverted in speaking and dealing with one another in shared time. In all three horizons, speaker, hearer and matter arise and converge into the moment of decision.

4.0 SPEAKING FROM THINGS

4.1 BEING-MOVED: FEELING, DEALING, SPEAKING

Matters present in the now are present temporally, that is, their presence is determined within a larger time-conditioned context, holding a before and an after within the now. In chapter three, we saw how matters are present in their futural ecstasy—as things to go after, particularly as things-to-be-decided, interpreted according to their aim in the moment of decision. Within this general futurity, we still see a temporal extension from past and future in the now. Each speaking aims toward a decision over a matter that has already come before us as requiring decision, and is made manifest and decided in the now. For the rhetorical there is no pure past, present or future, but rather a future projected from past expectation, taken here and now in its possible otherwiseness in changing shared time. We also see how futurity, the world and things in it, taken for the sake of something, is rooted in the expectations of *pathos*, in *hexis*, in *logos*: how we project from mood (*pathos*, desire, pleasure), how we project from habit (*hexis*, as how we are in terms of habituated choosing) and in basic patterns of reasoning (*logos* as connecting from—toward). These are directed toward matters that themselves are temporally conditioned: future matters in the good and bad, present in the greater and lesser, and past in the just or unjust. We will see the same temporal extension in how the matter stands before us, in *pathos*, in *ethos* and in *logos*.

The world is already underway when we find ourselves in it. In the previous chapter, things were described in relation to their aim—that is, things are present with an eye toward what we want to bring about, and the capacity and extent to which we may do so. Now, in Book Two, we see how things are always already there, for a hearer who already stands before us. Matters are before us in *pathos* as that which moves one to care about the particular thing in the first place. Something raises the thing from out of the transparent, there-yet-unacknowledged everyday matters of dealing and doing into shared concern. In habit, something interrupts our easy doing. In *logos*, our recognition of the problematic as problematic is conditioned by our repeated, habitual and emotionally textured interactions, raised in speaking.

We find ourselves in how the problematic, could-be-otherwise thing stands before us. For Heidegger, Dasein confronts itself—Dasein’s ability to Be—in its attachments to others and the way it projects outward from an existent disposition, repeated and observed in the engagement of everyday work, and in customary ways of reasoning. Book Two reflects upon on all three aspects of care: its moodedness (disposition), its understanding (comportment or habitual choosing) and its entanglement (shared speaking with others) to show how the matter has already become one of concern to the hearers who have come before the speaker.

In the opening of chapter [three](#), I argued that Aristotle interprets rhetoricity as having to do with things. Book One deals with things in prospect. In contrast with an eidetic, Platonic (and in our phenomenological account, Husserlian) sense of projection where things are “formed” in consciousness, the futural aim of rhetoric grasps the thing in the context of matters arising through the course of everyday life. In Book Two, matters are dealt with in retrospect. In other words, Book One deals with the world as on the way toward something, and Book Two deals with the world as *already* underway. Rhetorical speaking grounds a matter’s past in an

alternative way to the psychological, Sophistic (and Diltheyian) sense of reflection wherein the world as it appears is a product of the concrete material world being reconstructed in psychic experience, expressed in grammatical speaking and thus released to history in such a way that its validity can then be later confirmed. Rather than suppose that the speaker is able to simply move the hearer's emotions in such a way that the hearer takes the thing to be in a particular way, we see how things—again, in the business of everyday life—can be positioned in such a way as to change the hearer's affective relationship with that matter. As Book One rejects the origin of things in intentional consciousness for things encountered in dealing, as being worthy of pursuit, address or redress, Book Two denies the origin as in purely psychological response to and reconstruction of things from which speaking then flows. Book Two addresses how we are disposed to be moved by things, come to expect things to be according to past experience, and judge things here and now with borrowed knowledge. The things present to us are not the production of form or psyche. Form and psyche are instead coproduced by our engagement with things. Things are there already, and can be there in different ways. We see these things as we are moved to see them: the pleasant and good—the things toward which we aim—are pleasant and good to us if we already disposed to take the things as such, and that disposition in turn is constituted in the concrete interactions of everydayness ([1378a3-5](#)).

Book Two divides the pre-existing world already underway as being before us in three senses. First, we are disposed toward things, already invested or intertwined with them in our daily lives and are moved (or not) to attend to things in different ways. In discussing *pathos*, translated most commonly as emotion or disposition, and ontologically interpreted by Heidegger as mood, we can see how things have become matters of concern that call for speaking. Next, Aristotle considers how *ethos* shapes the way in which people are motivated to take up certain

matters of concern and ignore others in terms of progression of time in age, inherited family, material wealth and power, and habituated behavior. Finally, Aristotle turns to how our very reasoning is rooted in shared *logos*, routine, communal talk, where what we already believe contours the presence of things and others. For the speaker, and for Dasein itself, confronting what stands before one means questioning how one's mood (good will), comportment (good character), and modes of thinking and relating to things in speaking (good sense) look before others, and before one's own self ([1378a6-9](#)).

4.2 EXPECTATION AND *PATHOS*

Pathos does not refer to feeling, but to *feeling about things*. The *pathe* are before us ([1378a20-1](#)). This does not mean that they must be neutralized for the thing to *be as it really is* (indeed, if there is no disposition toward the thing, there would be no speaking of it), but rather we must understand how to bring the matter before the hearer in such a way that the hearer is disposed to take it in its otherwiseness. In the first section of Book Two, Aristotle shows how the *pathe* trace out our expectations, our prior assumptions about the world already underway with which we must deal, the temporal and proximal range of those expectations, the relative strength of those expectations and in turn the expectations of others toward ourselves. One's being in the world shares that world in time with others, who can be more or less as we expect and who can take us in expectation as well. Others in the world are special kinds of things—things like us, who have this here and now with us. We can be each other's means and ends, each other's desires and objects. We, as things in the world, are both valuable and vulnerable to one another.

Aristotle, in analyzing *pathos*, draws together how particular moods disposes us toward the world, the others toward whom we are motivated and related, and how that response is situated in time. The *pathe* are no fuzzy internal subjective feelings split off from the reality of the world, but respond to and are rooted in one's concrete engagement with others and the world, demarcated by a region of concern ([Gross, Secret History 2-3](#)). One has been already moved to care about the rhetorical matter, and our speaking of the matter shows how we are already disposed toward things. As Gross observes, the *pathe* display how matters matter to us:

Insofar as the *pathe* are not the annex of psychological events, but compose instead *the ground upon which language grows and to which expressions return* the *pathe* provide *the fundamental possibilities in which Dasein finds itself and orients itself* (["Being Moved" 38](#)).

I am one amongst others in the world, others who are the same sort of thing as I and with whom I share Being *and* being. In *pathos*, we see the ease and struggle with which we share a world with others in time.

We can read the progression of Book Two's treatment of *pathos* as revealing the increasingly thick network of attachments between Being and its world. These attachments have been established prior to taking the matter under consideration and thus prior to our engagement with the things encountered within the matter, but were themselves built in engagements with *matters* in the course of everyday life. We have to be moved to care about things, and we care about things in different ways and to different extents in particular situations. Heidegger uses Aristotle's treatment of *pathos* in *Being and Time* to show how Dasein finds itself as a being amongst beings confronted by its own choices, how we move from caring about particular things (beings) to our own ability to be (Being). Following along with the progression of the *pathe* in Book Two, Dasein is confronted by itself as an agent that can both expect and have those expectations dashed, who is open and vulnerable to the world with others who are also open and

vulnerable to the world, lives in the sight of others, and judges those others while using the judgment of others to measure Dasein's own self. *How do you find yourself?*

Aristotle pairs the *pathe*, not because they are the product of psychic or logical constructions, but because each pair offers a way to engage with the thing as being possibly-otherwise. When the speaker moves the hearer, it is not through baldly manipulating a psychic state, but shifting the relation between the hearer and the matter. The close temporal intensity of anger may be counteracted by presenting the thing as far off from our current time and needs, and thus unworthy of our concern. Pity may be curdled by contempt, where even those close enough to touch us, in acute present need, are exiled from the region of our concern as undeserving of even the slightest recognition. The *pathe* are not separate as an overlay of irrational distortion, nor an organizing manifold, but are manifest in our engagement with things as we are moved to engage with them.

4.2.1 Being-moved toward and away from the world: anger, calmness, love, hate, fear and confidence

We first find ourselves in anger. When things are as one expects, the world lays itself out as though it were an extension of one's own will. When one's will is blocked, however, the world breaks with expectation and exposes the disconnect between the desired and the had. In anger, I recognize that I cannot will the world into being and that others do not value things as I value them. There is a disruption in our shared being-together. Dasein recoils against its own limits, and then goes toward rectifying that slight ([1378a31-3](#)). The things to which Dasein reacts in anger show a second insight into Dasein's world. Anger implies, to a certain extent, a roughly mutual relationship—one reacts to one's own aim being blocked with anger only if one believes

revenge to be possible. I take myself as the sort of thing that is simultaneously capable of being hurt by you, and capable of hurting you, as you were capable of hurting me and are capable of being hurt by me ([1378b3-5](#)).⁴⁴ The response of anger also indicates a shared relation—one is angry because another has not valued things in shared time as one has valued them ([1378b10-13](#)). In anger, we see the initial impulse towards justice. The broader social motivation to right wrongs against collective expectation are, in anger, rendered in miniature.

Before going any further, I want to clear up a possible source of misunderstanding. Disposition, the initial motivation to engage with the matter, and the subtle system of valuation that the motivation reveals are not products of conscious thought. If I react to another person in fear rather than anger, my disposition toward the authority figure indeed shows that I take this person to have overwhelming power over me, against which I am incapable of acting. Yet disposition is not a product of calculation. The person is present to me immediately as a thing-to-be-feared, projected out from concrete, factual and historical experiences and expectations formed in my everyday dealings with the person and similar others. My judgment will be directed by the fearful disposition in the way I take the possibilities presented in the matter. I will interpret the matter, and things I encounter in that matter, in terms of possibilities for escape rather than resistance, and will choose in the face of uncertainty that which seems most likely to provide a path of escape rather than that which would provide the means for counterattack. Disposition is before us, before what we think and judge. *Pathos* comes before *logos* as that which calls us first to speak and decide.

⁴⁴ The relation needn't be understood as literally human and social, but when we expand our pathetic interaction to the non-human, we are still relating to them on human terms. For example, when I stub my toe on the desk leg, and kick it back in angry retaliation, I'm treating the desk figuratively like a person, reacting as though it had intended to hurt me. I have not, however, literally mistaken the desk for a person.

By pairing anger with calmness, Aristotle shows how *pathos* encounters things in time. Anger is bright and hot in the moment, but fades with passing time and changing circumstance, either in eventual resolution or removal from concern. Calm returns—this means that the state of calmness, of being at ease in the world, precedes anger and recedes from view into the familiar movement of life ([1380a7](#)). When we have the world in calmness, it is as we expect it to be. Nothing jumps out. In everyday living spanned across moments in time, the initial aim once blocked may be eventually fulfilled or simply replaced in significance by more pressing needs ([1380b5-7](#)). Shifting from expectation to change, then back again into the re-emergence of everyday patterns of living, Dasein finds the rhythm of collective existence in shared time. If, in our initial discussion of time, time was in the heavens, in living together through speaking, time is in squabbles and reconciliations of the *agora*.

Breaks with expectation and returns to familiarity imply that we have a world with others who share in our time and region of concern. We are not simply stifled in our aims by existing with others, but can be extended as well by taking in others' stead what we would feel for ourselves, and in caring about how others care for us. Human beings, after all, are beings that live not *amongst* one another but *with* one another in speaking.

Human relationships with things, however, are inconsistent from one thing to another. We care very much for some things, and very little for others. Lift your eyes for a moment and look around. Your surrounding space will not all be there at once. Your eyes will light upon certain objects and linger, pass unseeing over others. Love reveals our strength of attachment to things in the world (people, after all, are only one of many things we love), and allows us to be disposed toward the world not only in terms of our own needs, but in terms of the needs of the loved thing ([1380b36-1381a2](#)). We become angry *for* loved ones. One may love expansively, but

the further that attachment stretches, the thinner and weaker its attachment to things becomes. We love what is close to us, and wish to keep love close. One builds a surrounding world of uneven attachments, and in these attachments Dasein finds itself as desirous and as itself a thing-loved, to whom others extend themselves (or itself, as in the beholder's pleasure in the beautiful).

By extending ourselves in others, we build a region of concern in which we recognize that things matter to others as well as to ourselves ([1381a 2-6](#)). Time, and the things with which we are concerned in time, is not entirely our own—it is shared by others whose concerns we share in turn ([1381a8-12](#)). Those whom we love in shared time “think the things good which we think good, so that they wish what is good for us” ([1381a18-19](#)). The regionality of attachments, our place of concern shared with others, is also limited by time. One can come in and out of love over time, and love itself is a dealing with time—we love those who make the present enjoyable, the kind, funny and generally good humored ([1381a29-1381b4](#)). As Diotima describes in Plato's *Symposium*, the very nature of love is to go after the desired thing that has crossed your path, maintain the loved thing against the ravages of passing time, and renew or replicate the thing to stretch the finite into something closer to infinity. We love those who hold fast to us over time, even past death ([1381b25-28](#)).

Our region of concern is also demarcated by what falls outside. Hatred severs social attachments and exiles the hated thing from concern. Note the difference between anger and hatred: in anger, we hurt precisely because we have a share in each other's everyday life. The one toward whom we are angry matters to our own capacity to live, and can make that living harder—but it is also one whose life we can make harder in return. For better or worse, we share our lives and times with one another. In contrast to anger, Aristotle argues, in hatred one feels nothing toward the hated thing ([1382a13](#)). Hatred is moved beyond even the changing and easing

of time: “anger can be cured with time, hatred cannot” ([1382a7](#)). By pushing the hated thing beyond our shared time and region of concern, we deny any relationship whatsoever between the thing and our own ability to be. The hated thing “does not matter,” but in a way different from, say, that toward which we feel indifferent or that which we overlook. We exercise hatred by actively refusing to care and denying the thing entry to our circle of concern: “for the [angry person] would have the offenders suffer for what they had done; the other would have them cease to exist” ([1382a15-6](#)). The everyday does not extend endlessly outside of itself. We know that there exists something beyond our particular region of concerned existence, and in hating, we exile hated things to the place beyond care.

The pairing of love and hate shows both the expanse of our attachments and their relative intensity, as well as where those attachments absolutely end and the world beyond care begins. These attachments work both ways—as we are extended into others, so too are we vulnerable to others. If anger and the return to calm show the very basic rhythm of disruption and return in everyday shared life, and love and hate the region shared in concern, then fear and confidence show our relative contingency upon others in the changing world. The vulnerability discovered in fear, like all rhetorical things, is not absolute. We have a possibility to be saved and escape our fate. If one is resigned to destruction, one may be sad or full of regret that such a thing would come to pass, but one does not look frantically for a way out. We, as human beings, are things that can be otherwise than we are. We can be, and we can cease to be entirely. In fear, we trace out the lines of power and dependence beyond ourselves that threaten our being, and we attempt to escape. The moment takes on a greater potency toward the future ([1382a21-2](#)).

Fear measures both the relative closeness and likelihood of destruction in terms of regional proximity, and the extent to which the future can be rewritten or unmade in terms of

temporal possibility. What can be done ([1383a7](#))? In fear, one fears not simply others but time itself. Fear lives in its closeness, in time and place, to us, as the heightening of possibility that we or the things toward which we care may cease to be ([1382a24-27](#)). Dasein finds itself in its finitude—its ultimate possibility of ceasing to be—in powerlessness and openness (in a negative way) toward others “at the hands of particular persons, in a particular form, and at a particular time” ([1382b35-6](#)). Fear plays a very important role in Heidegger’s existential analytic of Dasein because it explains how in dealing with the very concrete—the *hands* of particular persons, in a particular form at a particular time—Dasein finds and confronts itself and its Being toward death from within the everyday world into which Dasein is thrown already underway. The worst of possibilities opens up before us in precise concretion, and in this moment of fear we find ourselves, at our own concrete limit, as something that can be otherwise. Shared time will go on, my time ends.

In confidence, our future is brighter, and we race toward it, in contrast to fear’s recoiling before the future. Dasein finds itself in control, able to grasp what it wants, is sure that it will meet its expectations. The world, taken in confidence, unfolds the way one expects. Confidence animates a belief, projected toward the future, that the world will be as it should, as we want it to be, and that our aim is almost in hand in the “nearness of what keeps us safe and the absence or remoteness of what is terrible” ([1383a17-18](#)). One feels the full power of agency in time to bring into being the desired end. Confidence, like fear, also addresses uncertainty. The fearful look for the slimmest hope, while the confident answer the slimmest doubt with the belief that one is capable of overcoming possible obstacles, either because one has in the past or because one has never experienced obstacles to begin with and underestimate the threat ([1383a25-7](#)). Together, then, fear and confidence show a horizon of possibility in terms of social vulnerability before the

world. As horizontal, as possibly otherwise, we can see how Dasein's possibilities are delimited by the relative proximity and power of others in more and less, past experience or lack thereof, projection into the future as that to be gone toward or recoiled against, and at-handedness or remove of things.

In anger, calmness, love, hate, fear and confidence, the one who undergoes emotion is responding to the ways in which one can act in a world filled with others. Each pair reflects a primary temporal orientation that leads interpretation of things in the now. We have the reactive, mixed, particular anger, the easing of calmness back from the heat of a moment, love extending oneself and one's present outward, hatred marking the limits of the present region of concern, fear reflecting one's vulnerability before the future, and confidence pursuing alternative, desired future. Anger and calmness are directed toward the past—when one responds in anger to a slight, the thing has already happened and thus must be rectified, and as calm returns the slight recedes into the distance as other needs replace it in the course of everyday life. Anger mixes the present with a past slight and future retaliation, calmness focuses on the present and eases past and future. In love and hate, we determine the expanse of our field of concern in the present, taking in the time and needs of others or excluding them absolutely from care. Love takes up presence in the moment as being shared by more than you, while hatred removes things from the realm of feeling at all. Fear and confidence address one's orientation toward the future, and the recoiling or advancing toward the world as it is here and now, away or toward what we wish that world to be.

4.2.2 Being-moved toward and away from others: shame, kindness, pity, indignation, envy, admiration and contempt

The civic dispositions gauge one's standing amongst and before others. We are not simply beings that set expectations for our aims, possess things in the present, and project into the future. We do these things with others and before others as well. The emotions of shame, kindness, pity, indignation, envy and admiration all address Being from the position of the judgment of others—what they expect, have and desire of us. The second set of emotions also display similar relationships to time; as we will see, shame compares the present to prior social expectation, kindness and pity address what may happen to those sharing their time with us, and indignation, envy and admiration address what we and others have here and now. Each occur in a sort of social middle distance, in between those so remote that they fall outside of our region of concern, and those who are within our most immediate circle, for whom we directly feel anger, love, fear and their contraries. In a limited, regional public, those with whom we interact in the course of our traffic and trade are with us, but only to an extent. Shame, kindness, pity, indignation, envy and admiration trace out Dasein's civic dispositions.

Shame highlights our recognition of the judgment of others, not simply their presence with us here and now, but their own expectation, attachment and watchfulness over ourselves. We are beings before the eyes of others. We go about our own everyday lives in full view of those who share in that everyday time and place while going about their own business. We have expectations of others that can be dashed—and others have expectations of us that we can fail to meet. When we fall short before the eyes of others whose opinion we esteem, we feel shame at that which discredits ourselves or those we love ([1383b12](#)). As Aristotle says, “shame dwells in the eyes” ([1384a33](#)).

If in love we recognize the claim of particular others upon the present, in shame we recognize a weaker sense of this social claim upon things. We have been seen taking things the wrong way: shrinking in cowardice, being lewd, grifting, exploiting the weak, refusing responsibility, flattering, or simply being bettered by our inferiors ([1383b2-1384a10](#)). Such seeing may be present, projected into the future in potential (one *might* be seen) and after the fact (someone might find out) ([1384b33-6](#)). In all these choices, our own ability to share the world with others comes into question in the course of speaking with one another: “wherever we are ourselves to blame for our present, past, or future circumstances, it follows at once that this is to a greater extent due to our underlying badness”⁴⁵ ([1384a14-5](#)). Honor, good will and trust, attributes of others that we esteem, all make living and interacting with others easier, and shame indicates when one realizes one’s own part in making that living harder. Shame also indicates the extent to which one is *aware* of the views of others in the first place—it is not simply *that* negative opinions are held toward us, but that *those whom we esteem* hold negative opinions toward us ([1384a24-27](#)).

In shamelessness, one feels no connection to the community and its judgment. In shame and shamelessness, we see whose expectations, whose eyes and “opinions of us matter to us” ([1384b27](#)) and whose do not. Shamelessness reveals the extent to which the expectations of others can significantly affect our ability to be: the weaker one’s attachments to the community are, the less the community’s expectations guide our own actions. For example, the powerful can act shamelessly because the opinions of others do not substantially threaten one’s own ability to get the things one wants. Here too, the particular middle distance of social disposition—we do not only feel less shame in the face of those far off from ourselves, we also feel less shame with

⁴⁵ I prefer not to use “moral badness” here but rather want to emphasize that there is an underlying defect with our capacity to choose.

those who are the most close to us, who accept us as we are. In close quarters with another, we feel shame only at our ownmost failings, not at contravention of social expectation ([1384b25-7](#), see also [1381b30-38](#))

As we extend our own region of concern to others in love, and cut it off in hate, we see ourselves as extensions of another's concern or community in kindness. Here the basic relation of love is extended to one that you do not know, who has no expectation of help but who is recognized and helped nonetheless ([1385a18-20](#)). In kindness, someone treats us fairly in a moment of need ([1385a20-2](#)). The kind-thing is the thing done for us, for the sake of us. Kindness recognizes that we share in time with others with whom we have some form of connection, not in any particular way but because we exist together in a region of concern. Kindness is measured by its response to time and by the *lack* of personal relationship between people—that one had no reason to expect something from you, and yet you provided what was needed. The most kind are those who fully understand time as not wholly their own and extend their concern to someone else, rendering aid when it is most needed (in contrast, consider liberality, where one gives to others indiscriminately, indifferent to particular needs at particular times) ([1385a26-7](#)).

If kindness allows one to recognize the temporal need of another for the sake of that other, pity interprets the suffering of another in terms of one's self. In pity, we feel a slackened version of fear ([1385b27](#)). Imagining how we ourselves would suffer if we were in the other's stead, we recognize incipient danger for someone else and seek to ease their suffering ([1385b13-15](#)). We pity those whose fortunes are undeserved, and thus pity expresses a simple sense of temporal social justice: good things should happen to good people, bad things should happen to bad people ([1385b35-1386a1](#)). In kindness, we respond to need in terms of the moment, and in

pity we respond to need in terms of proximity: those whom we know, but are not closely related, when danger is near us, to people *like* us but not ourselves or our closest loved ones ([1386a17-28](#)). The more strongly we can imagine the suffering of the other—the closer it “hits to home”—the further our care extends to ease that suffering. We may not be able to restore to the other what has been lost, but we may wish them relief from pain, as when we pity parents who have lost children. The experience of losing a child, however, highlights the middle-distance of social dispositions: the parent’s pain in losing a child is not pity for the lost child but immediate anguish at the loss itself, while others may pity the parent by remembering their own loss or imagining a loss that might happen in the future ([1386a19-23](#)). In all relations within a region of concern, the further in the past or the future a bad thing is, the weaker our sense of pity before it ([1386a28-31](#)). We care about what is here, now, set before our eyes and close to ourselves ([1386b6-8](#)).

Indignation marks the other side of the rough social justice rule that good things should happen to good people: good things should *not* happen to bad people ([1386b13-15](#)). We become indignant when someone has gotten a good thing undeservedly. Indignation focuses on the relation between others and things—particularly, others as in our neighbors ([1386b22](#)), and things that are productive, material and scarce ([1387a13-15](#)). In contrast to the generosity of kindness and pity, in indignation we seek to protect things from others who would use things poorly, saving the good for those who do good ([1386b28-33](#)). Our experience of things present to us here and now in shared time acknowledges that there are different levels of claim that different people have to different things. Indignation reveals one’s approximation of the appropriate length of another’s reach into things: “Indignation is roused by the sight of wealth, power and the like—by all those things, roughly speaking, which are deserved by good men and

by those who possess the goods of nature—noble birth, beauty and so on” ([1387a13-16](#)). The everyday is not a homogenous sphere where everyone participates fully and equally. We judge from a generalized social position toward a relativized particular person and thing: “we think you have too much—for you: “it is not any and every man that deserves any given kind of good; there is a certain correspondence and appropriateness of such things” ([1387a27-9](#)) There is no Anyone in a region of concern, no indifferent access to things. Our estimation of the claim of others upon good things is rooted in past interaction. As Aristotle points out, the long-rich and powerful are less begrudged than the newly-rich and powerful. For those in the there and now, the long-rich have always *had*, while in contrast, the new-rich *take* ([1387a18-27](#)).

Envy reverses the direction of concern of indignation, from the things you should not have to the things I should. Envy extends one’s one claim to things in the world, but through a prism of the desires and things of others. Indeed, it is not so much that the envious want anything in particular, but that they desire the things the other desires and possesses ([1387b23-4](#)). Anything that arouses a public regard is open to envy—reputation, honor, fame, wealth ([1388a1-3](#)). Envy *publicizes* desire. The desire of possession attempts to bring into one’s own exclusive proximity the desired from past (in those who have what we once had or wanted), present (what one obtains here and now) or future (what we do not yet have). Envy then grows with proximity and attachment to others who dwell closest to ourselves: “those who are near to us in time, place, age, or reputation” ([1388a5-6](#)), people of similar rank, fellow competitors in sport or business, even our own family ([1387b26; 1388a6-15](#)). Envy recognizes the radical scarcity and finitude of things we share with others in the world.

Finally, in admiration, we seek to become what others in our region of concern already are, and interpret the good in terms of plentitude, productive of itself, rather than finitude lost to

others and time ([1388a30-33](#)). We celebrate rather than begrudge the possessions of the brave, good and wise, for the good, brave and wise are all capable of making instead of taking good things ([1388b10-12](#)). The admired become models for what we ourselves should or could be. Dasein finds itself in what it is not, but not in a negative sense of simply being like the Anyone. If envy refracts one's desire through the figure of others, admiration refracts others' desire through the figure of ourselves. Aristotle finds admiration to be a positive social emotion, drawing people to strive to be more than they are ([1388a33-6](#)). In contempt, in contrast, others are marked as those one should never aspire to be, whose own desires should be ignored and rejected ([1388b21-6](#)). The contemptible desire and deserve bad things. As hate exiles the thing from a region of concern, contempt exiles from social desire.

Admiration presents a powerful rebuttal to Heidegger's contention that Dasein's tendency to see itself in the Being of others with whom one shares an everyday life has a leveling-down effect. In comparison with the admired, one does not aspire to mediocrity or take the Anyone as a hero, but instead someone within one's own region of concern, who is similar enough to Dasein's own self but made better through the capacity to choose well. Admiration shows in the acts and things of another what is worth going after one's self. Admiration in this way motivates one to expand their region of concern and sharpen the capacity to choose rightly in the moment: to become more and better than we are.

In the civic dispositions, we find ourselves in our interactions with others with whom we share things in time. My time becomes ours, and the things in my time become ours as well. Others strive and fear, possess and lose, become who we ourselves should or should not be, at the same time that we have our plans stifled and fulfilled, are drawn toward things in love and turn away in hate, shrink away from things and go after them. Rhetorical matters then present

things in this already established network of connections and claims, a region of concerns where we are moved to attend to things that can be otherwise and change in shared time.

4.3 EXPECTATION AND *ETHOS*: HABITUATED CHOOSING

Matters come before us in the world underway in other ways as well. Experience in the world with the everyday dealings of life over time functions to prefigure matters and draw us to take things in particular ways according to different dispositions. As noted above, Aristotle's discussion of *pathos* does not posit emotion as a vague psychological state, but as embedded in interaction with other in time. Disposition is not shaped in a vacuum, but in the lived and habituated experiences of the one disposed to deal with the world. Different people respond in different ways, according to age and personal situation, and thus speakers must position their own selves and the matter as the present, habituated hearer expects. *Ethos*, as a way of comporting oneself toward matters, forms through repetition in time in our dealing with everyday life. The *ethos* of the hearer is determined according to *pathos* and *hexis*, disposition and habituated choosing, and reveals how we are moved to see and deal with things ([1388b31-34](#)).

4.3.1 Habituated choosing across the span of life: youth, old- and middle-age

It is telling that Aristotle first addresses disposed *ethos* in terms of time. Given that our relationship to things arises from experience with the traffic and trade of everyday life, experiences over time affect our grasp upon things and the temporal horizon of the things we

encounter as the matter unfolds. Aristotle does not tell a comforting story about aging. The hope of youth, that things will be better than they are, slowly collapses under the weight of experience that “most things go wrong, or anyhow turn out worse than one expects” ([1390a4-5](#)). Things will be worse, will fail, will fade, and are not what we believe them to be. Human beings, in the course of life, move between two great countersayings toward things here and now, in future promise and past failure, and between our ability to push against the world and the world’s ability to push back.

The temporal horizon of youth, unsurprisingly, favors the future since the young have little experience upon which to reflect ([1389a20-4](#)). The young care without understanding, and expand their region of concern without limit for the here and now ([1389a17-20](#)). Things are present in possibility as what they could or should be, at the cost of concern over the probability of bringing that aim about ([1389a31-35](#)). The young feel expansively, untempered by social judgment; “they love too much and hate too much” ([1389b5](#)). They believe themselves the equal (at least potentially) of the great, yet still threatened by the small, quick to anger when their unreasonable expectations are easily dashed and yet open to pity and kindness because the young project their own care upon others with few reservations ([1389a29-30](#); [1389b8-10](#)). At the same time, the young are also concerned with the views of others, without much discernment for the differences of value in those views ([1389a35-2](#)).

The old feel almost nothing, their desire slackened and live only in memory—one has been humbled and, in seeing no agency before the world to bring the future into being, slowly ceases to care about the futural horizons of the here and now ([1389b14-15](#)). The old take the thing in terms primarily of past experience rather than future possibility, with the thing present more as the echo of a fractured past. Toward the otherwiseness of things, the old presume more

strongly that things will *not* turn out as we think—the thing is not perhaps *absolutely* otherwise than it seems, but is more likely than not to turn out that way. We presume this because, at a late age, we have seen how common it is to fail, “how hard” things are “to get, and how easy to lose” ([1389b29](#)). Yet time for the old has become precious, and the old struggle to hold on to what remains before it too dissolves into the past and is no longer. The old look to what is useful to preserve the winnowing away now at hand, rather than extend outward toward others and what is yet to be, for what is yet to be is death ([1389b24-6](#)). Concerned now with preserving one’s ability to be, and desiring only what has been and is no longer save in memory, the old turn away from sharing a world with others ([1390a6-8](#)). After all, while human beings may share in time, no one else shares my death. In old age, we are running out of our own time while shared time continues on.

Middle age marks a transitory period in the relationship between Being and its world, in which one’s expectations have been dashed enough to weaken hold but have not (inevitably) broken under the weight of existence. The things before one are taken as having a roughly balanced temporal horizon of possibilities, overtaken by neither past experience nor future possibility. In the same way, the middle aged still feel, but not in the unlimited sense of youthful ardor. The *pathe*, as we have seen, arise in our dealings with the world. The middle aged have come to learn what is worth being angry about, whose judgment carries social weight, and what things are deserved by themselves and others ([1390a30-1390b7](#)). In the span of a human life, middle age is the time in which we are most capable of grasping what is here now, grounded in experience still leavened by hope, and a concern with the practical as well as the good. It is when we are best able to grasp the otherwiseness of things in time in their dual visage, marked by continuity and change. Yet we ourselves, in body and mind, are things that change in time, and

our capacity to grasp things in the now inevitably waxes, then wanes and never fully holds on ([1390b9-10](#)).

The human experience seems to be one of our hopes against our lives. We are brought into the world projected into the future, but with a limited horizon that shortens by the day. And the things of human experience have the same character, shorter or longer in past and future but always split against the now. Age shows the progression through life for all human being, while fortunes of one's life speaks to how the particular journey, beginning with birth, has shaped the way one sees and approaches dealing with matters.

4.3.2 Habituated choosing and the fortunes of life: Family, wealth and power

No one asks to be born. One's life is given to one already underway—and thus there are conditions that shape comportment over which we have little control. If one's sharing a world with others begins with what is closest by and radiates outward, the conditions of one's birth and intimate spaces in which one comes to be what one is shapes how one takes the extended world to be. As the product of a storied or powerful family, one's daily dealings are always marked in some way by the past and those who came before us ([1390b17-22](#)). We project outward to honor those great people who came before, of which we are but a part, and value stability across time over change because it is precisely this stable extension from the past that secures our own standing here and now (thus, why the assembled civic body of aristocracy make futural decisions in light of the maintenance of rank). Yet this standing has nothing to do, Aristotle argues, with some sort of biological or hereditary necessity. Good families regularly produce bad people ([1389b25-31](#)). Rather, the comportment arising from noble birth is a habituated attitude, grounded in everyday dealings with matters in the light of one's forbearers.

Comportment shaped by wealth takes matters in the now in terms of possession and property, to be seen by others. Wealth lives in spectacle, “on the surface for all to see” ([1390b32](#)). The wealthy are disposed to concern over what things others have in relation to themselves, show their own possessions, and project outward in desire of what they do not yet have. In turn, the wealthy find themselves in the desires of others who come to them to share in their possessions, which in turn reinforces their own orientation toward the material ([1390b33-1390a12](#)). As Simonides answers when asked if he would rather be rich or wise, “Why rich, for a I see the wise men spending their days at the rich men’s doors” ([1391a10](#)). Yet given the concern that the wealthy have for possessing and having here and now, Aristotle argues that they lack a sense of change in time. The wealthy do not take things as that which can be lost, or which must be gained with labor and struggle because “there is nothing they cannot buy” ([1391a1](#)). In taking the world in what is good for me, now, the wealthy also lack a sense of social propriety, interacting only with those who would desire something of them and caring little for those who do not ([1391a17-9](#)).

If one’s birth takes matters in terms of what has come before, and wealth takes matters in terms of what is to be possessed and seen here and now, then power takes matters as projected into the future, aimed at securing ever-greater standing and influence ([1391a23-5](#)). Socially, the powerful, like the wealthy, expect others to subordinate to their will, but that subordination is not a matter of material transaction. The powerful require that others choose to subordinate themselves in pursuit of a greater end, to take things as the powerful person takes them ([1391a25-9](#)). The powerful are able to bring about their own desires, and constantly monitor the present conditions that enable or block them from achieving their ends.

Across the expanse of age, our dealings will be shaped by the fortunes that we find ourselves in. Fortunes themselves, which stand outside and before human Being in the world, still have for human beings the same dual character that marks everyday existence. If living—indeed Being—is too easy, where good things come to us without struggle and the world lays itself out as we would desire, we will not properly see how things are as otherwise than we expect them to be. We cannot see where the world pushes back and become reckless ([1391b1](#)). The longer we have spent preserving, possessing and achieving, the more we run the risk of misrecognizing that which is lost, withheld, impossible here and now. Yet, when fortunes are with us, it is as though we are gods ([139b1-4](#)). The rhetorical matter opens itself up in the space in between fortune and destruction, neither communing with the gods nor crushed under the weight of existence.

4.4 EXPECTATION AND LOGOS: CUSTOMARY SPEAKING

Thusfar, we have seen how Dasein is already disposed to feel and to deal with things. Now we will see how Dasein is already disposed to speak about things. The final section in *Rhetoric*, Book Two addresses the ways in which things stand in expectation, grounded in the way that we speak to one another about things. The moment toward which we speak is preceded by a deviation from expectation: something has gone wrong, something here and now is noteworthy, something is coming and must be dealt with ([1391b8-9](#)). Our common ways of speaking—whether we speak to others or consider on our own—show how things become matters of concern: the common topics give voice both to the expectations in a region of concern with which the now has broken, and the ways in which we deal with and talk about how to deal with

the disruption of everyday life, and more particularly with a disruption in our relation to things in the world.

4.4.1 Possible otherwiseness

To take a thing as capable of being otherwise than we expect it to be implies that we have some sort of awareness of additional possibilities. Interestingly, Aristotle notes that this concern for possible otherwiseness is not the product of differences in human perception, that in my now and yours we saw the thing differently, but rather is an attribute of the thing itself. Possibility comes from the thing, not talk about the thing. We take things as possibly otherwise even when we do not have an opponent or have not even spoken to another person ([1391b18-16](#)). Our previous understanding of the thing cannot fully address and accommodate the matter as it unfolds, thus we must deal with the possibility of otherwiseness. Specifically, in these moments, we are concerned with the possibility of otherwiseness *in time*, the relative likelihood of how it has been, is now and will be, and the very extent to which the thing is worthy of concern in the first place.

How do things become matters of concern as possibly otherwise, or impossible to be otherwise? In contrast to the principle of noncontradiction that reigns over matters of Aristotelian logic, rhetorical matters present themselves as possible in contrariness. In the temporality of philosophical speaking, things cannot be contrary, because such contrariness would give strict principle no firm ground on which to stand. In the temporality of rhetorical speaking, contrariness is precisely what is relevant in the rhetorical matter—what makes the thing first a matter of concern. Things that change in time are capable of becoming otherwise than they are in the moment. In order for something to become a rhetorical matter put forth to decision, it must

be open as a choice between possibilities. For the rhetorical, if one contrary is possible, then so is the other: if there is no contrary possibility, then it is in turn impossible for the thing to be otherwise than it is ([1392a8](#)). The thing is as it is by necessity. In the rhetorical, then, contraries are simultaneously present in what is here and now, to be judged in relation to one another.

Horizons of possibility are grounded in the thing as present—how it is available and at hand, toward what aim one seeks and how it is already known. The possibility of change in time calls our expectations toward the world into question. How do we draw, then, connections between the thing in question and our prior expectations, in order to limit the horizon of possibility? We relate to like things, tie them together in parts, wholes, genus and species, number ([1392a29-5](#)). We take them in time and make temporal and causal connections from now back, and past to now, from now to subsequent, origins to ends and back again ([1392a17-24](#)). We also take things as that toward which we move, deal and decide, within time. Things that have been, are being, or will be are present as desired, wished and possessed, reasoned and raged, and as done, made and aimed ([1392a25-29; 1393a1-9](#)). Finally, the expanse of possibility is limited both by our sense of likelihood or probability, derived from experience of repetition and return, and by the magnitude of importance of the thing within a larger context of the matter at hand ([1392b14-35; 1393a1-9](#)). Which of these possibilities seems most important, likely and of greatest concern will arise from within the situation at hand, thus, as Aristotle says, there is no point in drawing out any general rules ([1393a9-13](#)).

4.4.2 Being-moved from known to unknown

Bringing the thing into speaking then moves us from what is already said about the thing and projects out to a decision over that which we do not yet know. As discussed previously in the

chapter, the rhetorical orders using example and enthymeme, and the final portion of Book Two addresses both forms of reason in terms of how one is to project outwards from what is already known. In example, we have seen a similar thing before, and can use that past experience as a guide. The basic presumption of example is that we can carry over the has-been of one thing to the being of another, at *first* in very particular terms. In induction, we think from things out.

In example, we may call upon particular concrete experiences in the past whose conditions we face again in the present, and might guide our judgment toward the future, giving a sense from what has happened as to what will be. We may also supply our own constructed ground in comparison between general concepts or through fable, which move from particular situations to a general conclusion that reigns over a larger class of particulars ([1392b25-8](#)). In example, we also see the same temporal span of all speaking in the now, from using particular moments that have-been, from general examples to a general present, and in fable from a constructed example toward the future. Yet because induction is a starting point, it cannot fully support itself, insofar as the happening of particulars may not be enough to satisfy a general rule ([1394a12-13](#)). Though examples lead our thinking, they somehow still follow behind the happening of things in the world. As starting points, examples establish moments but do not secure continuity across time.

Yet our world of things does not simply include material beings but the things of talk. From the particularity of repetition in example, we move to the slow accretion and regulation of repetition in enthymeme, moving in other words from common topics to common sayings. Example forms the basis for enthymeme, the application of a prior experience to another, seeing this-as-that. Enthymeme then draws out the why and thereby explicates the relationship between things, a generalizing gathering of particular things ([1394a22](#)). In Book Two's focus on what

precedes the rhetorical moment, we see what comes before the enthymeme and authorizes the relations between things that then become shared premises. The rhetorical matter arises in the context of what the audience already believes.

The hearer is disposed already to the thing as a matter of concern within a network of affective attachments, and is projected upon by a habituated set of behaviors that deal with things in particular ways as “practical conduct, courses of conduct to be chosen or avoided” ([1394a25](#)). These predispositions come with their own sets of assumptions about the sort of reasoning that draws out conclusions from the world as it presents itself. Matters interpreted according to maxim play off of what we already believe about things. Maxims proscribe the socially negotiated expectations for how we should relate to things and deal with them in shared time—what is good and should be desired, what is bad and should be turned away from. Maxims take questions of desire and action in terms of fairly simple sayings used to reason about things, in inclusion and exclusion, or relations of part to whole, or general to particular ([1394b1-24](#)). Maxims cannot replace the thing with the word, however. They require grounding in experience in order to show something about how the world is, or otherwise become empty assertion ([1395a2-6](#)). Thus, the old prefer to hear the general observations of their own lives rendered as an authoritative account of how the world is. The hearers hear what they believe reaffirmed to them in the moment, that we all see the thing this way ([1395a11-12](#)). Aristotle calls maxims ethical because they acknowledge the shared-ness of thought within a given region, and speak out the reasoning for why the matter should be taken in this way. By showing in reasoning that the speaker reasons in the same way, the hearer trusts the speaker’s view of the matter and capacity to deal with things ([1395b8-16](#)).

Enthymemes are speaking-things, and so temporally, we are concerned with how the enthymeme *is heard* as much as what *to say*. Given the fleeting temporal nature of the spoken word, the enthymeme must be brief, as we move quickly from one understanding to another, but not so brief that ideas become jumbled together ([1395b24-27](#)). What the enthymeme then expresses is incomplete, broken off and left open for the hearer to reason in concert. Enthymemes reinforce the limited temporal and regional nature of concern and decision-making: not too long, not too short, not too far from what one knows, not too close to explain what is already clear. Aristotle says that the uneducated are often more persuasive than the educated because, in being concerned with immediate experience, the uneducated strike upon what matters most here and now before the audience, while the educated abstract and generalize ([1395b27-28](#)). Presence lives in directness.

In order to build an enthymeme, the speaker must try to capture some hint of the otherwise, building from what we already know to the question of what still remains unresolved. First, what stands before the question? We must understand the particular opposition between possibilities of otherwiseness in temporal terms: the matter has a history, a capacity here and now and an aim for the sake of something ([1396a4-8](#)). How can we praise without knowing the thing-praised, or accuse without knowing the thing-done of which we accuse? We begin with questions about the thing and how it is. We all engage in this sort of thinking, from moving from what we have to what we do not, whether strict or loose, given a long time or only a short window ([1396a34-1396b3](#)). We start with the thing, what it is taken in terms of its prior possession, its aim or need and its presence to hand (what it once was, could be and is now) ([1396b4-11](#)). By starting with the thing as emergent in a broader matter, we focus on talking about things, not talking about talk.

Next, when building an enthymeme, the speaker must identify what is *relevant* to things changing in time, how the things spoken of belong to the matter in its particularity as it unfolds and becomes pressing in time. The relevant is what is closest to hand (*eggutata*) in things as they arise in a pressing matter that stands on the cusp of changing and becoming otherwise. The irrelevant removed in distance and time and thus made general (*koinoi*). The relevant possibilities are delimited and bounded rather than vague and indefinite (*ahorista*) by what is more or less common and expected—what is suited to the matter as one knows it in everyday dealing ([1396b11-19](#)). In delineating what is relevant to the changeable thing, and limiting the possibilities according to what we have encountered in the past, we turn the thing from a matter to a matter-for-debate in *apophasis*, is/is not, the unitary claim upon the thing as spoken, and then in *kataphasis*, a countersaying against the saying of the thing. In posing the question of relevance, of what makes the thing what it is, we ask how the thing can be otherwise than it is. What is here, now? That the here and now would be preferred is not a defect of the hearer, but the better way of speaking about the thing. We must start from what is close—what the thing is as it has arisen to concern in dealing with the world, and then build out from this thing here to what has been said-here.

If this is how we begin to build the enthymeme (the speaking before), what does the enthymeme then do in the moment: what does it show? Enthymemes show both relations between oppositions and relations to things. First, we think in comparison, then, we think by way of definition, using speaking to establish connections or oppositions in the former, and then using speaking as a guide to illuminate the thing in the latter ([1397a6-10](#)). Connections between things—this is like that, this changes that, this becomes that—all bring one from the possessed to what stands outside our reach. Comparison grounds our reasoning between things, in even the simplest

and most abstract forms: if X then Y, for example. From comparison, we draw opposition, similarity, relative relation, more and less, time in expectation and fulfillment, even shared social relations (if you say your opponent is a scoundrel, you should not argue in similar ways).

To access the thing through speaking, we first make inductive connections between things to then show a larger system of relation—from particulars to general, deduction, division, previous judgments (of the majority, the revered, or the proper) of same, similar or contrary, parts to whole, analogy ([1398b31](#)). From induction, we move to concretizing and solidifying basic general principles. We consider the thing's relation to time, from effects to cause, change of judgment responding to change in time ([1398b31-1399a6](#)). Yet our definition of the thing is also tied to the dealings of others. Was it possible, easy, useful, bad or good for others ([1399b31-1400a4](#))? In all of these cases, our interest is, amongst these different ways of grasping the thing, determining which best shows how the thing is before us. In other words, even the guidance of these basic general principles must be judged against what is here, now and present before us. Principle does not fully determine the thing. For example, while one would presume that the probable would be more easily taken as likely and present, because it accords with expectation, Aristotle observes that hearers prefer improbabilities ([1400a5-8](#)). Probabilities are general, improbabilities announce themselves as matters of concern—they are present and real and demanding to us in their overthrowing of expectation. That which breaks against the general seems more real because it leaps out and demands we attend to it here and now, while that which accords with expectation fades more easily into the background of existence.

Enthymemes as speaking things are themselves things that can be otherwise, and may be spoken against. First, the very connection between what one says and what is can be refuted. One may call into question an appearance against another asserted reality (what you saw seemed to

be...) ([1400a22-24](#)). Second, one may take up or deny certain directions of reasoning. One may reverse the bonds of causality: if cause then effect; if no cause no effect ([1400a28-30](#)). The thing can be presented to show alternative possibilities outside of those previously claimed, or compared in contrariness ([1400a35-6](#)). The thing is not *as* you say it is, is not *how* you say it is, is *more* than you say it is, or is *in relation* to other things. Again, Aristotle stresses the importance of the direct speaking toward things here and now, as they are closest to us; refutation seems more vital because it occurs “in a small space,” that is, the region of concern is restricted to the saying and countersaying ([1400b25](#)). There is a delimited space between opponents and possibilities, the better for us to compare in close quarters. The speaker aims to keep the hearer as close as possible, so the best enthymeme is that which the hearer grasps almost immediately, keeping right along and, in taking the reasoning of the speaker as if it were their own, closes the distance between thing and word ([1400b28-34](#)).

In faulty reasoning, we see the distance between the word and thing, what seems and what is ([1400b34-37](#)). We mistake relations between words and things from the very sound of the word ([1401a12-3](#)), to the faulty combination of that which should be divided or dividing what should be combined ([1401a24](#)). Each fault ignores the relation between things and draws the relation instead at the level of the word—if you know a letter, you know a word, as though those two things were the same. By dealing with the relations between things only at the level of the word, the speaker does not take the thing in its social, temporal context. In other words, such a speaking does not encounter the thing in terms of a larger matter that would give meaning and direction to decision.

Using Aristotle’s example, it might be right in general principle to revenge the murder of your father, but wrong if, in the particular situation, such revenge would require that you kill

your mother ([1401b1-3](#)). We do not reach justice by adding matricide to murder. Arguments in this way are not simply logic puzzles, they refer to *things* revealed in *matters*—including people to whom we have differing strengths of obligation in different circumstances. Exaggerating the nature of the thing, conflating the sign and the thing, arguing from accident or faulty cause ([1401b4-34](#)): all of these are instances of *mistaking our speaking of things for the things themselves*, that exist in situations, according to differing relations, in contexts and ultimately as matters for concern in shared time. Faulty reasoning takes a particular happening for a general occurrence, a word for the thing, a sign for the thing, an act for the thing, pairs two things without relation, conflates the absolute and the particular.

Yet, the rhetorical also does not rely on the particular or specific alone (as we saw in the distinction between the thing as scientific and the thing as rhetorical). Making a special case against the general only from the conditions of the specific (for example, in counterintuitive argument) justifies without reasoning ([1402a9-16](#)). The counterintuitive misleads by presenting the thing in its punctuated and momentary look without connecting to our reasoning drawn from the continuity of everyday life. Such a temporal world would be chaos—all happening without a sense of how the happening came to be, is here now or will become. The specific is the thing we are to judge; the general is what lies before to guide us. The counterintuitive makes the present too present, too cut off from the patterns of life that give rise to reason.

Proper counterspeaking, then, requires a sense of both how the thing in question is itself otherwise, and how the speaking of the opponent may also show the thing as otherwise than it is ([1402a30-4](#)). Counterspeaking moves from induction to deduction, from the thing to its saying. To address the thing, we work out relations of contrariness, similarity and accord with common opinion ([1402b34-7](#)). To address the speaking, we question the relations worked out by the

opponent. All aim toward a question of probability or recurrence: amongst the arrayed possibilities, which are most grounded in likelihood? How do our basic principles line up with the matter in its particularity? As Aristotle points out, these relations are not of necessity—the probable and the necessary are different ways grasping matters, and the rhetorical mode ultimately only speaks to the thing that can be otherwise ([1402b28-30](#)). Thus the best is to be able to root the thing in both its past and its present to then project out into the future, which signs alone cannot do as they are always partial.

Finally, things that come before the hearer in speaking are present to greater or lesser extents. Amplification and depreciation speak to what is here now and the extent to which it matters to the hearer at all. Even speaking toward the present functions enthymematically to show that a thing is great or small ([1403a19-20](#)). Though the thing stands present, the degree of its presence in terms of the matter must be drawn from what it is already to what it is to become in speaking about it. And it is to how things become present in dealing with matters by speaking in the present that we turn in the final section of this chapter, as we shift to Book Three and the presence of the thing in shared time, made manifest in speaking.

5.0 MAKING THINGS PRESENT IN SPEAKING

5.1 SPOKEN PRESENCE

From how things have come to be to us in speaking, how we have encountered and dealt with concerns over otherwiseness of things before, we now move to how these things come to presence here and now. In Book Three, Aristotle builds the connection between the world and the word in speaking in terms of our engagement with things. We are to make things present, in voice, meaning in the context of life, relation, order and size, in a way that accords with the hearer's capacity to hear, move and be moved, through a progression in the speaking itself toward a decision ([1403b15-22](#)). Book Three describes how we bring the world and word close to one another by speaking of it as it is in dealing, moving, coping and caring.

We are concerned now with speaking, specifically with how speaking shows things in the present—Aristotle says the speaker should focus upon the *things that are happening, how they are happening*, yet these things must be said in ways that accord with the hearers one has here and now, not the hearers one wants ([1404a3-10](#)). As Aristotle argues, speaking is present first simply in sound, then the word, then the sentence. The voiced word is heard in accordance with the hearer's expectations as style, formed in a region of everyday dealing with things and speaking with others that share a here and now ([1404b1-6](#)). Significance, the meaning of the thing as that which has disrupted our everyday interactions and calls for attention and concern,

arises from speaking with one another and moving from the familiar to the unfamiliar. From the way that the thing is present in the now—in the moment of speaking initiated by the sound of the voice, we will then move to the larger structure of expectation already before us in the hearer and the projective composition of the speech as that which moves the hearer to a decision over the possibly otherwise.

At the very height of the spoken rhetorical art, our speaking and hearing of things in the moment of decision takes on transparency.⁴⁶ It is not that the hearer encounters the thing as unequivocal or closed to choice (it would, in such situations, no longer be taken rhetorically). The hearer takes the thing in choice, and if guided skillfully, believes that they have decided how *Anyone* would have decided in that situation, for they have taken the thing for what it is, as it is, here and now. The distance between a speaking of the thing and the thing has been erased. For Heidegger, rhetoric's power is in its ability to make-transparent. By approaching the art of rhetoric as that which *produces* transparency between the word and changing thing, Aristotle has given Heidegger both the structure of spoken presence and the means by which to subvert it. Projected for-the-sake-of, disposed toward already, the distance between world and word is made invisible in the presence of speaking. First, how speaking captures the moving, changing thing.

5.1.1 Presence and sound

Speaking is initially present to the ear, in sound. I mean initially present in the sense that speaking begins with the voice, and in that the speaking of others, the world as grasped by language first presents itself to us as human beings ([1404a20-2](#)). Things taken into speaking are

⁴⁶ In his lecture notes on rhetoric and language, Nietzsche observes that people have a curious tendency to invert rhetoric's relation to naturalness, presuming any deviation from the natural to be the influence of rhetoric, while the rhetorician's art lies in producing naturalness ([21](#)). We saw the same inversion in chapter one's discussion of the rhetoric-of problem.

first made manifest in the very sound of the voice, as we try in some way to take a thing in the world and fit the word as closely as possible. Things are manifest in speaking not by the literary word, but in sound from quiet to loud, low to high and soft to sharp. The spoken word moves in time. In Book Three, we begin with the ways that the word is connected to the world around it, and builds relations outward. The very first step, then, is the sound of the word as we bring the thing outside of ourselves to the region of shared human concern. From speaking, we then see the way that we speak with one another.

The sound of the voice is not limited in relation to the thing, but to the hearer as well. The word can only fit to the thing insofar as it fits, generally, with the way the hearer speaks about things. Though this seems obvious, speaking must sound the way we speak to one another, not the way we write ([1404b8-13](#)). The ability, in other words, for speaking to capture things as they are for the hearer must accord with a spoken sensibility and style, following the hearer's own speaking. We say it how it is. And yet, we speak in many ways. The thing is present both in its concrete facticity and in how we speak to one another about the thing. How, then, do we speak to one another about things in the world such as this one here and now?

In the same way that things become present in relation to doings and situations—their being at hand—the word is heard in relation to how it is at work and shared with others. When we hear, we don't just hear words in isolation, but things here now in doing and being done, as we do not hear noise but birds and wind, or here nothing but that for which we care. The sentence, then, as spoken in time must itself reflect the way things are in the everyday. Things are not present in long clauses or runs of hyphenation in the everyday ([1406a36-1406b1](#)). They do not disclaim or digress. Things jump to concern as we deal: a thing in moving, doing and making. Giving voice to things as we have them in everydayness, our speaking takes on a sort of

quick staccato, as everyday things quickly join up to our prior expectations and to one another. In order to speak of things in such a way that the thing becomes present, the speaking itself must capture both what the thing is and how it arises in concern with the direct and plain voice of everyday living and dealing.

5.1.2 Presence and style

Speaking as we speak in everydayness requires a certain unproblematic ordinariness ([1404b23-4](#)). In contrast, the poet wishes to beguile with the speaking as spoken, and the writing as written, where, in both cases, the matter is not the thing said or thing written but the saying or the writing itself ([1404b7-22](#)). The poetic style draws attention to the word. The rhetorical, on the other hand, must express itself with an almost naïve directness, but one still concerned with the possibility of being otherwise. How is the thing moving, how is it changing? Where does it stand out in concern and ease back in familiarity? The rhetorical expresses how a thing is in time, even in the very sound and sentence, to keep the thing hewn close to our own speaking and being in time.

We speak of things to others. A “style of speaking” refers to a sort of spoken accordance with heard expectation that secures a shared claim upon what the thing is in *our* here and now ([1404b13-21](#)). In establishing meaning, we share the speaking of things in time with one another. We speak of things in the ways they arise in everydayness—from our comportments, dispositions and ways of speaking.

Speaking of things that can be otherwise moves from the familiar to the unfamiliar. Styles of speaking, then, address the thing from within a familiar, expected way of expression in order to then move the hearer to grasp what is, in this case, unfamiliar. The speaking of matters

must line up closely with the way that those matters are dealt with in the particular region of concern, without obscuring the clear or making something great out of something small. In speaking of things, we seek to make our speaking itself inobtrusive, so that the matter seems to be as we say. The inobtrusive clarity of speaking that matches with the hearers' expectations eliminates distance between the thing in speaking and in dealing in the world—to have what is here now *as it is here and now for us*. Hearers listen for the natural, the places where the distance between the thing and the thing-spoken seems to be the smallest, and the thing self-evident. When the hearer becomes attentive to the space between the world and word, the speaking on the other hand seems an artificial imposition upon the thing.

5.1.3 Presence and movement

That meaning presumes a certain shared space and way of speaking might suggest that the system of signification is closed—we can hear and understand only what we already know. Aristotle's discussion of metaphor, however, shows how speaking itself confronts and makes manifest that which has broken from familiarity. Metaphor opens up possibility and brings the unfamiliar into the familiar without escaping the everyday ([1404b32-8](#)). Things are present to us in speaking in two basic ways, as extant beings and as doings, as static and in movement, noun and verb. In the middle, we have things that can be otherwise—as here, now, most importantly in the capacity to change. The thing is something with which we are simultaneously familiar and unfamiliar, and metaphor allows for such an expression of things that can be otherwise ([1405a34-6](#)).

For Aristotle, metaphor must capture the sense of the thing in movement, the thing doing as we encounter it in life, rather than as a static word-picture ([1405b11-13](#)). The florid,

poetic/literary metaphor (where the relevance is the saying or the writing) provides a lovely but ultimately static image, open to spectatorly appreciation, but lacking closeness or involvement. Cut off from the already underway concern for everyday life, the poetic/literary metaphor becomes a sort of *tableau vivant*, made of living things frozen in place. Metaphor is harder wrought in a rhetorical mode of speaking than the poetic because the rhetorician is concerned with bringing the hearer along into the picture, rather than leaving them to wonder at it from a remove. We have to create closeness instead of distance, and thus must remain in the intimate quarters of existence, with only a small extension into interest and wonder ([1405a34-1405b19](#)).

Metaphor extends the close quarters of what Heidegger would call dwelling by showing what stands before us in a new light, pleasurably accessing the senses in accordance with full sensorial human experience of presence, darkened yet by a shadow of obscurity. Metaphor extends the familiar into the unfamiliar without fully settling the situation, drawing in an obscurity that cannot be entirely papered over. Metaphor relates one thing through another to show an aspect of what the thing is without a proper act of definition, leaving in its extension a space in between word and thing. The range and reach of metaphor is set by 1) the present thing, and 2) other better or worse things in relation to the given hearer or community. All these things must be in some way already familiar as a part of everyday life within this particular region of concern, and in the juxtaposition of metaphor become possibly otherwise than they are. The pirate is a purveyor or a criminal. One makes a mistake or commits a crime. Something is taken or ravaged ([1405a25-8](#)).

Speaking cannot wholly refigure the world—rhetoricity, after all, speaks of things in concrete specificity rather than abstract, unlimited possibility. The value of figurative speaking is in bringing new rays of possibility within a matter to the thing that has come before us. The

good, the right the beautiful are all determined within the space of the here and now, speaking to the situation and the present. The thing *is qua* here and now. Even simile, which emphasizes distance and draws attention to a relation between distinct things, is grounded in the things' concrete and particular being upon which the relationship is forged ([1406b20-5](#)).

Poorly wrought, metaphor deadens a lively world, and arrests the flow of being. Speaking rhetorically draws the connection between world and word as closely as possible, and must reflect how the world is for us: already underway, proportional to our expectation, direct and sensorial ([14011b21-31](#)). Aristotle's discussion of "frigidity" (*psuchra*, dead and cold) is particularly interesting, because the proper showing of things in speaking easily escapes notice and the speaking takes on a sort of transparency. The failure of speaking to bring things into presence reveals barriers between world and word. Compound words call attention to speaking as poetic, as do strange words ([1405b35-10](#)). Laborious description lacks discernment for what is relevant and loses the capacity to bring *the thing* before the eyes, instead creating a noisy cloud of chatter ([1406a11-35](#)). We talk about talk and not about things. The inventive capacity of speaking acts in a close range, perhaps amplified or minimized, but not too much ([1406a16-7](#)). Our metaphors must speak the way life is lived, in order to make that which can be otherwise present before hearers.

To speak to the present, we must understand how things are present in the course of life. Liveness in speaking comes from hearing the life in the voice, and showing the thing as it is encountered in living. The voice, Aristotle says, presents a liveness unavailable to written language because it is capable of movement itself, like the movement of things. Yet this sense of movement relies upon shared social life: localized ways of speaking root the capacity to make present. Thus one must write for speaking as one simply speaks to others, in its clear stops and

starts ([1407b11-13](#)). Speaking well does not mean speaking ostentatiously; we wish only to speak in such a way that nothing blocks the hearer's access to the matter at hand.

The movement of the voice is paired with the movement of the speech as a whole toward decision. We describe the moving, changing world in terms of this-then-that, kept close together for hearers to follow along ([1407a19-30](#)). Presence in time, even of that which can be otherwise, is not vague or general, but datable—then when something happened ([1407a35-1407b6](#)). To present liveness of things in speaking, one must address datability: *which* then, *which* here and *which* now, or, futurally, *when* something will be rather than *that* something will be. Liveness of speaking expresses liveness of things. And this liveness is made manifest in the quick and the slow, bigger or smaller, in movement from and to, extended in relation, but cut off when held at too far a remove from the thing as encountered in shared life and time ([1407b11-25](#)).

5.2 PRESENCE TO THE EAR

As explained above, things are made present in speaking only when our speaking accords to the expectation of the hearer who has come before us. The first six chapters of Book Three outline the constituents of spoken presence, from the sound and rhythm of the voice, the presence of the thing in relation to other things in an extended region of concern, and the specific being of the thing as changing in shared time. The bottom line is that presence requires a closeness between the thing and word, thus one must choose carefully which word fits the thing so that it appears in a certain way. In the second section of Book Three, Aristotle explains with what sort of expectation this presence must accord in order to keep close to the hearer.

5.2.1 Expectations of sound

Propriety expresses the relationship between the word and our expectations of shared speaking. In his discussion of propriety, Aristotle follows along with the basic division of the phenomenon of speaking that we have seen repeated throughout the *Rhetoric*: expectations arise from disposition, comportment and the matter—*pathos*, *ethos* and *logos*—what stands before, what projects outward and how the matter appears in speaking in the present ([1408a10-11](#)). Propriety toward the matter requires a sense of proportion. The matter may be weighty, pressing and important to the hearer, or trifling and worthy of only minor concern ([1408a12-15](#)). Speaking to the matter also reveals disposition, not simply in word choice, but in volume, rate and rhythm of speaking ([1408a16-19](#)). Anger, indignation and reserve are *voiced*. Finally, the hearer connects the way the speaker sees and is disposed to the matter to the hearer's own sight and disposition, determined by both one's sociohistorical location and habitual choosing (the split we saw in Book Two) ([1408a20-32](#)). The speaker whose speaking accords with the hearer's expectations—these particular people shaped by both chance and choice—is *more believable*. The thing is as you say it is ([1408a33-36](#)).

The closeness between speaking and the spoken-of is determined in the context of the moment. Propriety grasps the moment, is *eukairos*, while the improper fails ([1408b1](#)). Given the dynamic relation between speaker, hearer and matter, all capable of being otherwise before the moment, under certain conditions speaking that would normally be considered inappropriate can yet fit the situation. For example, under sway of great emotion, we expect strong speech ([1408b5](#)). The speaker so moved by the matter struggles to bring *more* to the thing, to explain it in the fullness of its being as though no single word were enough ([1408b16-17](#)). The thing, in this way, does not sit in static isolation from our dealings, and our dealings are initially

motivated by disposition. To fail to capture that sense of fulsome, overwhelming meaning radiating out into others who themselves have been moved to take the matter into concern, is to fail to grasp what the thing is for us: a thing of disgust or desire, of loss, or of inspiration.

Rhythm captures in speaking the repetitive but variable movement of living and speaking in time. Rhetorical rhythm is organized, repetitive and progressive in time, but not strictly metric ([1408b30-2](#)). Note how the very rhythm of speaking mirrors the discussion of time in chapter two. Time, taken in metric, chronological terms, is derived from original experiences of time as repetition and return without guarantee. The precise meter of poetic composition is, in the same way, derived from the basic rhythm of everyday speaking, which unfolds in play of long and short, slow and quick ([1408b33-1409a9](#)). Aristotle calls for a mixed speaking rhythm, here slow and exact, there sprightly and rolling, shifting in and out of time and number ([1409a6-11](#)). Most importantly, however, rhetorical rhythm accords with and just slightly heightens the regular rhythms of everyday speaking of the hearers gathered here and now.

5.2.2 Composing speaking for hearing

Composition of the speech's overall trajectory, aiming always toward decision, follows along with rhetorical rhythm. We must compose the speech to be heard and voiced properly. Stringing together clause after clause in an unending run of recursions gives the hearer a sense of having no end in sight, or destination toward which the speech aims. To use Aristotle's metaphor, in the continuous style, the end is so far away that the short-winded hearer runs out of breath ([1409a26-34](#)). In the short style, at each point the hearer grasp something at hand. Extending the running metaphor, the direct style is point-to-point in its movement, coming to presence, jumping ahead, and then coming to presence again ([1409a-351409b-5](#)). Yet if the duration in between is too

short, arguments pile up and are not given their proper time to unfold. We stumble over ideas ([1409b18-21](#)). How do we create the balance? Aristotle recommends dividing and opposing contraries (this and this, not this, but this), which both reveal the horizon of otherwiseness and draw us to a particular ray. Both possibilities, balanced in equal clauses, are brought close but remain separated in division and antithesis ([1409b33-1410a1](#)). The thing arises itself in a spoken situation, a spoken context, and the very composition of this context lays out differing relations, in equality and antithesis. In this way, the very structure of the now is repeated in a balance of punctuation and continuity.

Both the rhythm and composition of rhetorical speaking reveal the structure of the now for the hearer. In rhythm, we hear the repetition of time outside of a particular metric. In composition, we hear the now's dual visage, to mix a metaphor. Rhetorical speaking toward the now cannot be so continuous that there is no end toward which we move, nor so punctuated that we cannot see the relation of becoming linking one thing to the next. As we saw in [chapter two](#), from the structure of time, we move to the structure of care—how we bring the new, relevant and important from out of the familiar, route and unremarkable.

5.2.3 Moving the unfamiliar into the familiar

Wit (*asteia*) is an example of a heightening of the reality of everyday speaking—it is the speaking of the town, a concentrated shared region of traffic and trade, taken into care and *refined* ([1410a5-7](#)). Wit speaks as we speak but better. Perhaps more pointedly, the witty speak as we would like to speak ourselves by drawing novelty and particular skill from out of custom, giving our expectations a sly, knowing wink. If in propriety we determine the expectations for speaking held by those with whom we share time, and accord with such expectation in the sound

of the voice, rhythm of speaking, names for things, and arrangement of ideas, in wit we extend to what the hearer does not yet have, heightening the style. Human beings enjoy learning things through words, and in taking pleasure in wit, the hearer extends into the unknown ([1410b10-13](#)). A witty metaphor subverts expectation, showing in a single move *both* what the thing is *and* what it is not, both in view. The hearer, directed toward the presence of the thing, likes the quickness of metaphor, that the thing is put right before the eyes even in its dual-sidedness ([1410b20-35](#)).

Aristotle contrasts the sly speed of wit with the irritating slowness of a poorly-wrought or pedantic enthymeme. To borrow a phrase from Petrarch (himself cribbing from Cicero), reason without wit “tries hard to keep one eye open,” “yawning drowsily” ([521](#)). Most enthymemes fail because they belabor what we already know rather than illuminate that which we do not know, or are so removed from popular knowledge that the hearer falls behind the speaker—the present must lead us, but just a little bit, and must do so by extending the past knowledge into the present ([1410b21-7](#)).

The efficacy of both metaphor and enthymeme should be judged on temporal rather than logical terms, by which I mean that primarily for the hearer, the value of the enthymeme is not in its procedure but in the extent to which the hearer is moved to take the thing from what is initially believed to being possibly otherwise. Belaboring wastes the hearer’s time, while going too fast gives too little time. Finally, while both metaphor and enthymeme aim toward the future and move from what one grasps toward that which one does not, speaking of well-held beliefs uses the hearer’s previous experience in speaking to guide judgments by applying the opinions of those esteemed in this region of concern. The proper time is determined by how the hearers gathered in this region speak in the everyday.

Speaking brings before the eyes, in such a way that in speaking one show not just what but *how* things are. Speaking brings before the eyes by showing things as they are present in dealing ([1411b24-5](#)). Dealing is an activity; it is something that we do. Thus the thing must be shown in that dynamic sense of activity, as being in act. It is present before the eyes as a doing, which brings it life and connects it more intimately with the way that thing stands before us in doing. By proportionally connecting things together in terms of movement, action and change, relations drawn metaphorically or analogically show not simply particular things that could be otherwise, but how things become otherwise in a moving and changing world ([1412a9-11](#)). People become seasons shifting slowly over time amidst death and rebirth, or stand particularly as a concentrated form of an entire time and place. Places, in turn may be present in the people who reside within, as possessions to be guarded or looted, or as weapons used to secure our desires. Things themselves take on comportments and dispositions, and have wisdom, nobility or shame. The active metaphor captures a world in movement, bringing things into a larger context of action, doing and dealing.

Putting before the eyes means showing the thing as it is in time—this is what “signifies actuality.” Things come before the eyes not as static, for where there is no movement, we mark no time, but as already doing and being, as thing with which we have or do business. It is before us here and now in its fully everyday human relationship rather than as a bare object. The foursquare is inert; it is unremarkable to the eye in the course of living and dealing ([1411b26-8](#)). The blooming, on the other hand, is in the midst of beautiful and temporary becoming, and the ranging searches afar for what it does not yet have ([1411b28](#)). Static metaphors fail to grasp the thing in the context of human life and existence, as something that moves and changes in time with us, and it is the thing in the context of life that we must judge in the moment. Even the

lifeless stone is encountered in the movement of life, for “actuality [*energeia*] is a movement [*kinesis*]” ([1412a5](#)).

So, metaphor must show movement and relation between things. We live, however, not only *with* things but *in speaking about* things. Speaking shows the absent, and lengthens the distance between word and thing. Speech shows through misdirection, drawing a conclusion one would expect and then breaking away to wrench the thing from the hearer’s expectation ([1412a18-20](#)). We can say what we do not mean to draw attention to the gap between our sayings and the things-said, as in satire ([1412a25-7](#)). Jokes challenge expectations and play speaking against the things spoken of ([1412a28-1412b11](#)). Similes connect while leaving a partial remove between things, blurring the strict categories of things in speaking against the more ambiguous world underway. Where “is” falters, “is like” picks up ([1412b33-1413a14](#)). Hyperbole exaggerates relation, making things not just smaller or greater, but smaller or greater *than they are* ([1413a18-23](#)). Even in distancing the word and the thing, the delimiting boundaries of rhetorical everydayness still hold. Speaking that brings absence to presence may only do so within a small compass. The joke is only as funny as it is timely and specific to the thing, the simile only as apt as the relation is relevant to the moment. Hyperbole without some sense of particular discernment becomes ridiculous.

Thusfar, we have seen how the voice, word and speaking make things present as possibly otherwise before a decision, and how that making-present stretches back into what has already come before into what could be in Book Three of Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*. Finally, Aristotle addresses how the speaker must compose and engage in speaking in order to bring the desired decision into being. From present, to past, we turn now to futural ecstasy of rhetorical presence.

5.3 MOVING TOWARD A DECISION

I have discussed previously how the being of writing and speaking are different. Again, Aristotle stresses that the primary necessity for all speakers is, unsurprisingly, a knowledge of speaking. One may speak without the ability to write ([1413b2-8](#)). The extent to which, then, one considers the speech compositionally must be directed toward speaking. Writing lays out the basic mechanisms of shared language, but only speaking addresses which situations call for speaking, and which for silence. Last, I consider not simply speaking, but oppositional counterspeaking.

5.3.1 Movement in word and composition

Insofar as we must compose our speeches in a written form, then, we must still capture the movement of life and the voice ([1413b9-10](#)). Speaking shows comportment and disposition—we are not simply communicating an idea, but have been moved to take the matter into concern in a particular way, and have a particular comportment from which we view that matter ([1413b9-17](#)). Take, as an example, the asyndeton, a list of happenings all linked together without connectives that bring many things into a small span of time. Things are piled in quickly to one another, capturing in the spoken word a sort of desperate, unstoppable movement up into which things in the world are caught. In the words of Xenophon, “they were pushing, fighting, killing, dying.” The voice moves with the things, slower and then faster, quieter then louder so that the thing in its presence jumps up before the eyes and then runs quickly out of the hand, not repetitive but building beyond control ([1413b21-31](#)). In asyndeton we hear the sound of a world that moves and changes with or without us.

For each kind of speaking, there is a kind of presence related to its temporal orientation before the moment. The forensic deals with the past, which is more concrete, as Aristotle says ([1414a10-13](#)). We patch together what has been from the particular experiences and observations of those who shared the things time and place. The speaker, then, approaches the thing-done at a close range. Speaking to the past speaks of particularity, directness, and gives its account within already-established affective and material connections. The hearer in the courtroom is even literally close, requiring that the speaker lower the volume of the voice. The progression of speaking circles closer and closer to the determined thing-done in its specificity.

In contrast, speaking to the future presents things as unfinished rough sketches ([1414a15-6](#)). The matter and its hearers are further away, requiring a bigger view and louder voice before a larger crowd of people who share in that future. As something that is not yet, our speaking about the thing to be is more speculative than determinative.

Finally, for speaking toward present things, one reads significance off of the situation, magnifying and minimizing ([1414a12-3](#)). In all, we speak toward the middle distance of everyday life, between the closeness of a concrete happening and farness of possible horizons. Too concise and the thing has no range of possibility, too diffuse and there is no concrete being here and now ([1414a23-5](#)). Our speaking of the here and now takes on the unproblematic, clear and understandable character of things at hand. Speaking toward the present does not merely show things here and now, but how we are to relate and deal with those things in shared time. We may show in speaking things magnificent and agreeable, things of liberality and of temperance, of pleasure and disgust—our speech need not have these traits as a rule, but only with respect to the temporal matters to which one speaks.

In all, our speaking shows how the world and things within it are present: in a mix of familiarity and unfamiliarity, things can be otherwise. In the rhythm of the voice and progression of words, we show how things move and change in time. And in fitting the matter to the hearer's disposition, desire and shared time here and now, we make living in and sharing a world easier.

Speaking itself takes place in time. Arrangement deals with the speaking as a progression, through which the matter comes to be taken into concern, and the thing is presented as a choice for the hearer. The form of speaking follows from the speaker's ultimate aim—the decision—and the matter before which the speaker stands. In this way, arrangement too reflects the basic temporal ecstasies of rhetorical speaking, toward decision and from situation. The basic movement of speaking itself is simple. We claim, then we prove, for our claim alone is not enough to settle a thing that can be otherwise ([1414a30-3](#)). The movement of speaking, then, moves from what the thing is, to how the thing could be.

Moving from *what* the thing is to *how* it can be addresses the thing in the context of dealing in time, in matters. The question is what is relevant in the thing's being for the aim and problem at hand? The temporal orientation of the matter will determine the particular needs for the movement of the speech ([1414a36-1414b2](#)). If the issue in speaking of things-done is how something has come to be the way it is, the speech will have to deal with the narrative process. Narrative brings "becoming" into word, from what it once was and is no more, to what something now is. Yet there is less to narrate in epideictic descriptions of how things are here now, or deliberative projection into the future about how a thing might be. Speaking toward the past, present and future have things in different ways and define them according to different relevant aspects in time. For all speaking, however, arrangement follows the larger movement of speaking toward decision, from where we being to where we aim—from making the claim upon

the thing (*prothesis*) to showing what speaks for the thing in the moment in proof (*pistis*) ([1414b3](#)).

In order to determine the proper movement for the speech, Aristotle argues that the speaker first must determine what is needed for the speech to reach its aim. The exordium provides a beginning that paves the way for what is to follow. Aristotle likens the exordium to a “key note” that gathers and orients musicians before a song ([1414b19-25](#)). The exordium guides the hearer’s understanding of the matter by establishing the aims, attachments and relations to the thing that are relevant to the gathering here and now, and projects outward into the speaking to come. In speaking of present things, our beginning grounds the speech, from which we aim toward honor or condemnation, guided by past advice toward what is good, better, best, and bad, worse, worst, and are nearer to or further from hand for those hearing here and now ([1415a5-7](#)).

To bring the past-thing into the present, the matter must be delimited to both motivate hearers to position themselves toward the matter and attend to the matter’s own movement ([1415a7-15](#)). The exordium puts the matter into the hearer’s grasp to then lead back to the initial moment of choice in the past. We need a through-line to move from the middle of a story already underway to its initial origin in narrative. The exordium establishes that world under way, filled with people and things in preexistent differing relations with one another. Because our speaking of things itself takes place in time, the exordium also helps to limit and focus a long and complicated narrative.

The exordium addresses the entire phenomenon of speaking, and to this end deals with not just the matter, but sets a key note for the speaker, hearer and opponent. One speaker draws a picture, and brings a person before the eyes, while the opponent cuts into what we think we know about the person, opening up possibility ([1415a25-33](#)). In accusation and defense in the

courtroom for example, the accused's comportment across time is juxtaposed against the thing done, the good person against the bad thing, while the accuser calls into question the comportment of the accused in light of the thing done, the bad thing against the seemingly good person.

Beyond establishing or breaking open the relation between doer and thing-done, the exordium must make the doer and thing-done matter to the hearer. The speaker may aim to make the hearer well- or poorly-disposed to the matter, attentive or inattentive ([1415b9-14](#)). Within the matter, the thing may be present as of concern to the hearer or not, important or unimportant, that toward which we are disposed to pursue go or from which we recoil ([1415b18-31](#)). In each case, the thing is approached in its temporal situation within a matter, as something that *has* gone wrong, *is* important to our moment here and now, or *will be* that which we desire—or, countering, the thing is none of these. The thing in its temporality is determined according to disposition (already), magnitude (here and now), and closeness to hand (yet to be).

The exordium projects by showing how the thing is important for the sake of something yet to be, and reflects by showing how the thing has come before us and shaped this now, here. The exordium, in this way, presents how the world is for us, in projection, disposition and attentive presence. Such considerations extend outside the matter itself to the larger shared time, but are ultimately directed toward decision about the thing in the moment. For example, Aristotle observes that the speaker must grasp the right moment to sharpen the hearer's attention on a crucial time in the narrative when *something changed*, or when otherwiseness opened up. We cannot take in the whole story in this way. If everything in the narrative is important, nothing is. The story of passing time would be a series of radically unique points which nevertheless remain undifferentiated from one another, other and other and other. No point of the story is more or less

relevant than another. Such a way of recounting time looks nothing like the everyday world, where some moments are heightened while others pass unnoticed within an expanse of time—split between punctuation and continuity.

We do not speak to the hearer *qua* hearer, but *qua* thing. In other words, the speaker does not simply arouse prejudice in the hearer, but arouses prejudice toward the thing-done, here now, or –to-be-done, or in the other direction removes apprehensions about the thing. Dispositions are directed toward the things with which we deal ([1415a33-7](#)). We also establish in speaking goodwill between hearer and speaker in friendship and compassion over dealings with things. Remember, that the hearer is a particular hearer whose perspective has been formed in a particular region of traffic and trade (thus are Athenians differently disposed to the greatness of Athens than are Spartans. Athenians and Spartans are not irreconcilably different beings, but are most certainly differently disposed toward the particular thing that is Athens) ([1415a33-1415b3; 1415b27-32](#)). For the deliberative, the exordium's meticulous previewing and positioning of the matter is less important because hearers have already gathered about it—hearers already know that it is of concern and are reacting to that concern by speaking to one another. The hearer requires less familiarization and orientation, but the speaker must deal with prejudice, magnification and minimization ([1415b32-38](#)). Even projecting toward the future, the speaker must first present the anticipated matter in such a way as to show how things might be otherwise.

In order to open a matter up to otherwiseness, speaking must remove prejudgment. Others cannot fully know who we are. We never completely share things in time with others. We rely on speaking to show temporal relations to matters, specifically one's capability to grasp the matter at hand. We contest such a grasp in speaking as well: that the thing is not as the opponent has said, that it is not important, that it is not so exaggerated, not unjust or only slightly so, not

disgraceful ([1416a7-13](#)). We dispute both the claims of the is-ness of the thing and the magnitude of the claims about how the thing is, measuring out concern by degree. The hearer judges (and prejudices) both matters and speakers, and so speakers may prejudice opponents and their standing based on the opponents' past acts, arousing suspicion, or challenge previous claims about ourselves and others or past acts ([1416a20-35](#)).

The exordium and its creation and removal of prejudice capture present speaking's orientation toward the past against which the hearer will later decide. The exordium presents a pre-delineation of the speaking to come and projects into the future toward decision, prejudice addressing what already stands before one in speaking. Now, we move from what comes before the speaking, to narrative, which moves the speech to its goal.

5.3.2 Narrative as a marking of movement in time

Narrative functions to show the thing in its temporal being, as a thing within a matter. That matter, as we have seen, is determined according to its pastness, presentness, or futurity. Narrative may track back from the present moment to the particular thing-done in the past, project from past example to future possibilities for things in the present, or construct a collage of past and future within reach of the present. Narrative joins together the thing outside our speaking, and the thing as present in speaking within the remit of art ([1416b17-22](#)). We speak of the thing in the context of its matter as that which has taken place, is here now to a certain degree of concern, and is important for the sake of something yet to be. Time is a marking of movement, and speaking marks the thing in time. Narrative takes the thing outside of speech—the bare thing—and shows its being in moving, changing time: a thing-that-took-place, a kind-of-thing-here-now, and a thing-to-bring-into-being.

Narrative, the movement of things shown in speaking that clads the thing in time, varies in length according to the matter it marks ([1416b32-1417a3](#)). If we are talking about a datable moment, a concrete then that we see from our particular vantage now as in speaking to the past, the concern is with how the temporal thing has come to be in its particularity. Here, we are concerned quite directly with narrative, as a displaying of the thing's coming-to-be ([1416b19-21](#)). If there is general consensus on how the thing came to be, we need very little explanation, and more focus on what it now is: how wrong, how important ([1416b25-8](#))? Narrative also marks the speaker's comportment toward the matter and the hearer, because it shows the extent to which the speaker grasps the matter and the path toward the thing, in the face of choice ([1417a16-20](#)).

The aim of the speaking changes the requirements of narrative to show a thing in time. In defense against opponents, the speaker punctuates the continuity of opposing narrative, calling into question not the entire span of here-to-there but only key points that disjoin the thing from a span in time. Thus the temporality of defense is punctuated in particular moments, in accusation as elongated in an intentional here-to-there ([1417a7-11](#)).

So, how are we to be toward time in narrative? Hearers stand before time in choice, in *prohairesis*, gauging the human capacity to form the world as it is in changing time. Fixed systems of signification cut off from the flux of everyday life, like mathematics, do not require practitioners to take up a choice, or to concern themselves with the relative propriety and reasonability of that choice before those who share everyday traffic and trade ([1417a18-20](#)). The things with which they deal are not presumed open to otherwiseness in changing time, as the means and ends of signification are fixed within a system of verification and validation. In the

temporality of everydayness, in which we are our choices, our comportment toward things matter. So, what is the end toward which we go, and how does it open up a choice before us?

5.4 SPEAKING FOR THINGS

A comportment toward choosing is not the same thing as an intellectual exercise. Rather than existing in consciousness or intellect, choice over things that can be possibly otherwise in time unfurl themselves in how the matter stands here and now and how we grasp at it, in comportment, understanding and disposition: Are we moved by it? Do we wish it? Do we think it good or better? Do we choose our means discerningly and our aims virtuously? The character of our narrative, the comportment or view from which one marks the changing thing in time and offers a choice in the face of the thing's possible otherwiseness, reveals how we grasp the thing as useful and good. It is not a matter of intellect, nor a product of mathematical or logical procedure, to stand before a choice over that which could be otherwise than it is ([1417a23-1417b4](#)). The speaker, in narration, voices how one makes the choice, how one chooses to take the thing. And if the perspective or choice goes against expectation, one must explain why.

In marking the thing as a matter in time in narrative, one also reveals disposition: how were you at the time, or how another was. We draw inferences about disposition beginning first in the sensorial—the voice, look, and body. Glances, tones and gaits all point back to how people have taken things to be ([1417a36-1417b4](#)). The choice given to hearers in the same way is a judgment of the speaker. The hearer watches the speaker and from narrative judges how the speaker looks and seems to be, how they would choose and live. We get hints of the message from the messenger, even before the message is spoken ([1417b8-11](#)). In sum, the extent to which

the thing's particular way of becoming and changing is a crucial aspect of grasping the larger matter, determines the extent to which narrative is necessary for speaking. From the concrete particularity of things in the past, to the fractured and disjointed present, to the future as rayed out from past example, narrative marks the movement of things in time.

5.4.1 Speaking for a thing's presence in proof

If prejudice deals with the choice as pre-determined, and narrative as choice embedded in time, proof brings things forward for choosing in speaking. Proof shows something about the thing that could be otherwise, ground its possibilities and delimit the horizon of those possibilities within a region of concern: proofs stand in for the matter in the moment ([1417b21](#)). We can make any number of claims about things, but that these claims do not in and of themselves speak for the thing. We must show how the thing is, speak for it in this way and let something stand in for it. Fact, injury, importance, justice—these are about things and must be tied to those things ([1417b23-7](#)).

Epideictic speaks to not the concrete existence of the present thing, which is here and now with us and before our eyes, but rather the thing's importance and relevance to our doings in the here and now. Will it do us good in use and do us well in honor ([1417b30-34](#))? Proof, in the epideictic sense, makes the present present in speaking, and demarcates the region of concern: here and now, we are surrounded by things. Which things matter for who we want to be and what we want to do? These things become, as it were, more present or rather the present is being engaged in in terms of these things; they have marked the now. They leap out of the familiar and regular backdrop of everyday life.

In deliberative speaking toward the future, the thing is here now in its possible consequences—in what it is not yet, and whether or not that not-yet is something we seek and desire, or turn away from and renounce ([1417b35-1418a1](#)). Proofs prove in time. To stand in for the thing as not-yet, speaking must show the thing present here and now as capable of yielding that which we seek. In other words, we interpret the thing here, now in terms of its for-the-sake-of, as it is to in the present, projected in its possibility by what has been in the past ([1418a1-2](#)). The span is still here: it is right, it is capable, it is worth going after. And yet the thing could, at each point, be otherwise. Opponents may also be mistaken, or fail to substantiate their own claims. Proof, then, links the world outside of us to our claims about that world and how it has, is or will be. Speaking of things in the future links those things present to concrete happenings in the past. We ground the thing's possibilities in past example and determine the relative probabilities of those possible rays of otherwiseness in order to aim toward the future.

Speaking of things in the past moves from the known in the present to the unknown of the past, here and now back ([1418a25-6](#)). The thing of the past has already become, and the question now is why it has become that way. The general rules of enthymeme guide a tracking back from the particular present to the conditions allowing the present to come to be as it is. Where enthymemes address how the thing has come to be what it is, maxims address how hearers comport themselves toward matters and deal with things. Maxims address the choice and how we should choose rather than the supply conclusions about the thing itself, shifting enthymematic reasoning from being to doing ([1418a36-1418b2](#)).

Our capacity to grasp the thing changes the way we address the situation in speaking. The thing of the future cannot be an object of knowledge because it has yet to be. The issue of relevance is instead how the thing could possibly be and change over time. In addressing the

future, the speaker has a weaker hold in the hearer and less control over how the hearer judges the speaker's comportment. It is hard for me to say how you're taking up the thing of the future, how it intersects with your own needs and desires. Our attachments, projected into a shared future, are weaker than those that have developed with past dealings. Epideictic addresses the thing in terms of its concrete presence and in light of its past. The generality of enthymemes has less purchase upon the thing. It does not stand before us as the instantiation of a general principle but as a real, pressing and particular concern. In choosing and showing what is significant in its presence and how it is significant, speakers show themselves in comportment and choice. What is most important is not one's capacity to grasp the present in terms of its absence (what it has been and is no more, what it could be and is not yet) with precision, but to show the present in movement in a way that accords with the present hearers: as it is here with *us*, not with *you* or *I*.

5.4.2 Speaking with one another: Speaking and counter-speaking

Refutation rips open connections between the said and the thing rather than builds them, going after the joints between world and word ([1418b5-7](#)). To say, "it is not," as opposed to "is," requires less specific proof insofar as the concern for the thing is in its saying rather than as in itself. Temporally, if we precede the first speaker, the audience will be disposed in a particular way, thus the second speaker must push back and create doubt to reopen the matter to choice ([1418b7-16](#)). We do not want to make our positioning obvious, but instead should emphasize the wisdom of doing by others in maxims, shifting the thing from a logical certainty to an ethical choice ([1418b33-8](#)). What the thing *is* guides but does not fully determine how we should deal with it, because it may be yet otherwise.

Interrogation shows the thing as revealed not just in talk, but in talk with and against one another, a sort of performance of thinking in back and forth. The back and forth in question and answer explicates and tests the connections made between things, or between thing and word. The interrogator aims to open up the gap between sayer and said ([1418b39-1419a16](#)). As in composition, in interrogation we cannot be too precise in speaking for fear of leaving the hearer behind ([1419a17-9](#)). Words fade in the memory while matters remain. Thus while interrogation concerns itself with the speaking of the opposition, it must still focus on the speaking *of things* by that opposition, and keep the small compass of speaking and counterspeaking drawn around the matter more than the word.

Questions themselves have a movement toward things—they set up a narrow window or span of possibility and have an aim, revealing the “drift of argument” ([1419a23-4](#)). In response, answers must have their own countermovement, as both sides aim toward decision. Like questions, jokes function as a counterspeaking, overthrowing expectation overthrow by playing speaking against things and making the distance between the two more farce than tragedy ([1419b3-9](#)). Jokes punctuate the otherwise smooth continuity of everyday speaking, revealing that speaking to be facile, hypocritical or even dangerous. We can comport ourselves toward the thing, in other words, in seriousness and in absurdity. Irony draws seriousness and absurdity together, treating the foolish as though it were of great importance not to efface foolishness, but to expose it through contrast ([1419b13](#)). In both interrogation and joking, we tear apart that which has been drawn close and continuous by others.

5.4.3 The temporal horizon in the moment of decision

Aristotle's discussion of the epilogue functions itself as an epilogue for the *Rhetoric*. Hearers stand, at the end of speaking, before a choice yet to come. Speaking must, then, prepare hearers to come before the choice ([1419b10-13](#)). There is a woozy sense of time in this final moment, as though the whole movement of the speech has condensed to one final, pivotal now stretched out still backward and forward even in its condensation. Directed toward what is not yet, the hearer reaches toward good and turns away from bad, relatively or absolutely in the decision ([1419b13-19](#)). Toward the present, hearers look to what is here, now as great or small, toward which we reach out or recoil, as being possibly otherwise ([1419b20-23](#)). Toward the past, the hearers are moved to decide in disposition, drawn toward one possibility and away from the opposition ([1419b24-7](#)). In memory of the movement of speaking, the matter is brought to the cusp of decision ([1419a28-36](#)).

As the hearer becomes otherwise in time, so too is the matter over which the hearer has come to preside. The thing is now before us in terms of degree, as something that could be otherwise. And it is taken up by those already disposed toward it, which comes before that judgment and will shape how we take this thing here and now to be in its present and its possibilities. Only once the full temporal horizon of the thing, its aim, presence and past, are taken together can the thing be brought to its conclusion through speaking. Only when fully manifest in speaking in time do words *mean things*.

Considering the progression of the speech itself, an epilogue need not repeat what has been established prior if the speaking of things has consistently aimed and oriented itself around the thing. If the matter in which the thing has arisen, however, has become overly complicated, we must again and again clarify. A confused matter connects things too thickly to the significant

and the accidental alike. In these instances, a consistent reiteration not just of what has been said, but specifically which relations and connections matter to what the thing is and which do not, cut away at the mass of matter to the thing ([1419b33-36; 1420a4-1420b1](#)).

Once prepared, the epilogue brings the thing forth completely, or rather, as completely as the rhetorical mode of speaking is able to do: it is *probably* this way. In retrospect, the epilogue reach back to prospect: In the now in which I began, I promised you something—to show how the thing stands before us here in decision. The beginning initially drew out the rays of possibility for the thing. I said that it is this way, and it is this way for this reason. There are other possibilities for the thing, it can be otherwise, but given what has been and what we have here and now, such possibilities are unlikely. The rhetorical thing can only become a thing taken as what it is in decision. In its final act of becoming otherwise, in decision the rhetorical thing becomes otherwise than rhetorical—perhaps only for a moment. Things change. For the moment, speaking has taken possession of the thing...it is...and the movement of rhetorical speaking comes to an end.

The *Rhetoric* closes perhaps the only way that it could, with an epilogue by Lysias. “I have spoken; you have heard; the facts are before you. I ask for your judgment” ([1420b4](#)). Speaker, hearer and matter, brought forth in time from what has been said, what is present now, and the decision to come. And it is at the point of the decision that rhetoric and the *Rhetoric* both end, at the moment where the thing is no longer taken as otherwise. In that moment, the thing has changed. Even the order of Lysias’ epilogue follows the arrangement of the *Rhetoric*, as we began with the guiding look or aim for speaking in time, the hearer who comes to us already disposed toward the matter, and ended with the speaking itself in the here and now, all suspended

in otherwiseness before the decision: the ability to see, in each given case, the available means of persuasion.

The internal composition of the *Rhetoric* follows the same pattern. Book One begins with the aims of speaking. The futural aim of deciding over future-things is discussed first, followed by deciding over present-things and deciding over past-things. From aiming toward the past, Book Two then addresses things as they are already for us in disposition, how hearers have come to project upon things through the course of life, and finally how things are taken as present in customary speaking. Finally, Book Three deals with presenting the thing in speech here and now, accords with the expectations of the hearer, and moves toward a decision. The thing comes to presence in the voice, the word and the relation. It is met by expectation, and moves out of itself toward a decision.

In more direct terms, each of the temporalities of rhetorical speaking are approached first in terms of a primary temporality and second within a temporal horizon of possibility stretching along each ecstasy, in simultaneous futurity, historicity and presence of the thing, laid out in an interlocking arrangement:

Futural orientation addresses the thing in its for-the-sake of, as aimed toward decision

Over things in the **future**

Over things in the **present**

Over things in the **past**

Past orientation addresses the thing in how it already is for us

Past disposition before judgment of the thing in affective attachment

Futural comportment toward the thing, shaped by experience

Presenting things in accordance with past associations

Present orientation addresses how the thing is brought into speaking

As made **present** in voice and word

As accorded to **past** expectation in heard meaning

As composed to move **futurally** toward a decision.

Rhetoric ends with the decision, where the thing taken as possibly otherwise becomes otherwise than rhetorical. Yet, decisions over things that change in time are themselves open to change in time. The *Rhetoric* in a way is itself written in a round, and ends with a return to its beginnings, where the matter has been brought into word, but then broken free to be spoken of anew. The art of rhetoric, then, is in getting as close as possible to the thing as it is for us in everyday life, from its familiarity to its otherwiseness. The business of rhetoric is with appearances—and appearance is how we first have a world, our most real reality. To what extent does the appearance of the thing in speaking accord to the appearance of the thing as you have encountered it while living, doing, coping and caring? Speaking aims to capture the thing not as a bare object, but how it appears to us in the course of our days that moves and changes in shared time.

Eureka, akekoate, echete, krinate. I have spoken, you have heard, here is what is, now decide. What does it mean to call something rhetorical? It means to say that what is relevant about this thing, what *matters here and now*, is its possibility of being otherwise in the shared, changing temporal region of everydayness, textured by uneven attachments formed in our dealings already underway, projected through our undertakings, and encountered in a shared space and time. The rhetorical thing is the thing encountered in the temporality of everydayness, and the art of rhetoric is the hermeneutic of that life that we live initially, generally and for the most part. This movement in time through speaking is captured in the Lysian epilogue, as we

move from having spoken, to having heard, to being standing before us now, all suspended before the decision yet to come.

The check on proper speaking is not additional systems of speaking through which one divines truth from falsity and correctness from incorrectness (a matter of logical procedure). Rather, the test for rhetorical speaking is the extent to which bringing a thing to word accords with the hearer's experience in this shared space and time of traffic and trade with one another, all within a world that we can push out against, that pushes back upon us and is always just beyond our grasp. The height of rhetorical art is transparency, but that transparency is produced through a close engagement with how *this matter here* has come *to matter to us now*. Is your speaking itself alive, sharing in this world with me in disposition, in aim and in what is here now? Does it bring to presence the thing as it is *for us*? The thing is in a wild world already underway with others, present and absent here in bits and pieces, taken up by our desire to be in the world and be *well*, certain only in that one day we will not be at all, when all the speakings of all the things in all the world will finally become irrelevant. Only in death does the otherwiseness of things no longer matter.

Perhaps we should not be surprised that the place beyond the cares of everyday life, reached only in death, is where Heidegger's 1954 "Dialogue on Language" begins.

6.0 THE GROUND OF TIME AND SPEAKING

...it could be the most fruitful of questions...

[Carroll C. Arnold, “Wingspread—The Final Session” \(181\)](#)

6.1 THE MOST FRUITFUL OF QUESTIONS

To begin the concluding chapter of this investigation of rhetorical ontology, consider two moments in Heidegger’s life and work, the first from *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy* in 1924 and the second from the “Dialogue on Language” in 1954.⁴⁷ The first is rhetorical, the second philosophico-poetic. Yet, both passages say the same. Behind each “it is” articulated in the moment of decision lays a world of caring and dealing, living and working, traffic and trade in time that has come to language. The first, from BCARP, describes how an investigation of the origin of the concept in a temporal relation between speaker, hearer and matter, brings one to begin with what is said and move back into the matter that called for speaking:

With this purpose, *being-there* was explicated, being-there *with respect to its being*. This explication was laid out so that *basic concepts would come to language*. These basic concepts came to language with the purpose of immediately serving to make being-there visible and intelligible as the possible ground of basic concepts themselves. The *genuine interpretation* occurs in the right way, then, only if it is fulfilled *on the ground of explicit conceptuality*, if the

⁴⁷ [Unterwegs du Sprache \(On the Way to Language\)](#), the collection in which the Dialogue first appears, was published in 1959, but Heidegger writes in a reference note that he composed the Dialogue in 1953/4.

interpretation is retrieved, is understood in accordance with the found. Therein, a *general hermeneutical principle* appears, that *every interpretation is only genuine in retrieval*. Only then is it a putting-forward of that which no longer stands there ([BCArP 184](#)).

The second, from the Dialogue, describes how the Being of language is revealed through the course of speaking with one another.

Japanese friend:⁴⁸ It seems to me as though even we, now, instead of speaking about language, had tried to take some steps alone a course which entrusts itself to the nature of Saying.

Inquirer [Heidegger]: Let us be glad if it not only seems so but *is* so.

J: If it is so, what then?

I: Then the farewell of all “It is” comes to pass.

J: But you do not think of the farewell as a loss and denial, do you?

I: In no way.

J: But?

I: As the coming of what has been.

J: But, what is past, goes, has gone—how can it come?

I: The passing of the past is something else than what has been.

J: How are we to think that?

I: As the gathering of what endures...

J:...which, as you said recently, endures as what grants endurance...

I: ...and stays the Same as the message...

J:...which needs us as messengers ([Dialogue 54](#)).

To conclude, if the rhetorical thing is that which is capable of change in shared time, what is *not* rhetorical? In BCArP, Heidegger sees the concept as arising from the human struggle to deal with its world—to say *it is*...in such a way that the world stands before us. In the Dialogue, the impulse to render the decision *it is* is given up to instead abide with Being. One attempts to reconcile being and otherwiseness, the other stands open and resigned before all being. While I will contrast early and late Heidegger, I do so understanding that what *does not change* in Heidegger’s work is his own struggle to understand the connection between world and word. He may leap philosophically and poetically, but the ground from which he leaps is rhetorical.

⁴⁸ The Dialogue refers to Heidegger’s interlocutor as “a Japanese,” which sounds awful. I will use the additional term “friend” to indicate the warm relationship between conversation partners.

6.2 SPEAKING FROM LIFE

The *Rhetoric* grasps the dynamic temporality of speaking.⁴⁹ In a speech's opening exhortation, we speak *in the present* of things *yet to come* as *here with us already*, calling us to speak. If the exordium gives a key note for speaking yet to come, the key note for Heidegger's "Dialogue on Language" is missing. Not forgotten or skipped over, but missing as a silent note. That note is Goethe's "Wanderer's Nightsong II," first written on the wall of a mountain hunting lodge not unlike Heidegger's own "hut" in Todtnauberg, as the poet took in his wooded solitude ([Perloff 89](#)).

<i>Über allen Gipfeln</i>	O'er all the hill-tops
<i>Ist Ruh,</i>	Is quiet now,
<i>In allen Wipfeln</i>	In all the tree-tops
<i>Spürest du</i>	Hearest thou
<i>Kaum einen Hauch</i>	Hardly a breath;
<i>Die Vögelein schweigen im Walde.</i>	The birds are asleep in the trees
<i>Warte nur, balde</i>	Wait; soon like these
<i>Ruhest du auch</i>	Thou too shall rest.
	(Goethe 53)

The Dialogue opens with death, the silence of the restful grave. Given the way time will be treated elliptically throughout the work, beginning a meditation on language with the most emphatic of endings seems appropriate.

J: You know Count Shuzo Kuki. He studied with you for a number of years.
I: Count Kuki has a lasting place in my memory.
J: He died too early. His teacher Nishida wrote his epitaph—for over a year he worked on this supreme tribute to his pupil.
I: I am happy to have photographs of Kuki's grave and of the grove in which it lies.

⁴⁹ A shrewd Heideggerian will note that I continue to use the word "speaking" even when Heidegger has abandoned speaking as the seat of Being. I do so because my theoretical framework addresses speaking as the initial concern and then works backward. I have no privileged access to psyche, conscience or truth. I can only access the trace of the word that speaks of things. More simply, I continue to work the vein that Heidegger left behind. A philosopher may deal with Saying, but a rhetorician deals with concerned, everyday business of speaking.

J: Yes, I know the temple garden in Kyoto.⁵⁰ Many of my friends often join me to visit the tomb there. The garden was established toward the end of the twelfth century by the priest Honen, on the eastern hill of what was then the Imperial city of Kyoto, as a place for reflection and deep meditation ([Dialogue 1](#)).

The unidentified epitaph—the silent note—is Kitaro Nishida’s translation of Wanderer’s Nightsong II, finished shortly before Nishida’s own death in 1945 ([Yusa 331](#)). Nishida labors long on the immense task of interpreting one of the most famous verses in the German language in a way that remains true to the Japanese word, in fitting tribute the student with whom he shared a struggle to reconcile East and West. The final version etched in stone reads:

*Miharukasu
yama no itadaki
Kozue ni wa
kaze mo ugokazu
tori mo nakazu
Mate shibashi
Yagate nare mo yasuman*

Visible far in the distance
are the mountain peaks
At the tree’s tip
no wind blows
no birds chirp
Wait a while,
You too shall rest
([Yusa 331](#)).

As a philosopher, Nishida wrestled with the relationship between logic and nothingness—the speaking that exclaims the thing, and that which can never be claimed as a thing. For Nishida, the relationship between the tangibly human and the divine that outstrips it absolutely flow out of everyday life. Ordinary life has in it something eschatological. In our present there remains not just past and future as determined by traffic and trade, but *eternal* past and future, brought forth in what Nishida calls the absolute present ([Nishida 111](#)). In “Wanderer’s Nightsong II,” beyond

⁵⁰ Tomio Tezuka, Professor of German literature at Tokyo University, on whom the character of the Japanese friend is modeled, referred specifically to his conversation with Heidegger about Shuzo Kuki’s grave in “An Hour with Heidegger.” Tezuka had not actually visited the gravesite and saw it only in photographs Heidegger possessed himself:

Heidegger’s interest in Japan appears to have been first aroused by the late Kuki Shuzo, about whom he spoke very fondly. A man from Kyoto, Uchigaki Keiichi, had visited Heidegger in Freiburg some time before, and Heidegger had asked him for a photograph of Kuki’s grave in Kyoto. Mr Uchigaki accordingly wrote home and had several photographs sent, which Heidegger now showed me. The natural stone of the headstone, the beautifully scripted epitaph, the surrounding plantings—the entire well-planned grave is one of the most elegant I have ever seen. In its synthesis of the natural and the artificial, it conveyed a comprehensive sense of the refinement of Japanese sensibility ([Tezuka 61](#)).

the birds and wind, there is silence that one hears in the moment before sleep and death that gives the wanderer a final home where wandering ceases.

Death, that sudden absence and silence, the pressing being of nothing, pervades Heidegger's Dialogue. As discussed in chapter [four](#), the only human time that is fully unshared is the time of death. In Heidegger's later philosophy of language, we find the moment defined against death, and speaking countered by silence. The two bear a close connection. Theodore Adorno remarks on Goethe's sly irony: "the seconds before the bliss of sleep are the same seconds that separate our brief life from death" ([Adorno 42](#)) The whirl of life is our lot, and the approaching hush, the moment of stillness at the very end, is only temporary consolation rather than a transcendent realm of essential being. The "subjective spirit is thrown back upon itself" ([Adorno 42](#)). When the wanderer, defined by the trek away from home, comes home and ceases to wander, the wanderer ceases to be.

I turn to Heidegger's later work to show a span of possibility in which the rhetorical functions, and where, at the poles or end stations, it does not—or in the above metaphorical terms, where the rhetorical ceases to wander and ceases to be. I have argued that Heidegger's turn to Aristotle's *Rhetoric* allowed him to move from the calcified speaking of logic (and its outgrowth, science) to the moving and changing speaking of life. The definitional capacity of the word to *mean things* depends upon its ability to capture the thing in its matter, both already underway and projected forward, as it stands here and now, in and for the moment. The Dialogue presents a second end-station at the opposite pole from conceptual language stripped of time: speaking of things in the shadow of death, where time is fully Dasein's own for a moment of fleeting consolation.

6.2.1 The ground of speaking in life

I have told two parallel stories in order to explain what it means to say that something is rhetorical. First, Heidegger struggles in the 1920s to draw together language, being and time in such a way that none remain locked away in consciousness or psychology and become products of logical procedure. For the human being, time is a marking of movement born of language that is never the less *in things*. Second, Aristotle describes the basic mode of speaking for the animals that live together through *logos*—a speaking that one engages in and encounters consistently throughout one’s life, with art or without. Aristotle demarcates the rhetorical as neither a deficient earthly mark of the ideal form, nor as a drug that warps human perception of things as they *really* are. Heidegger navigates between Husserlian eidetic intentionality and Diltheyan psychological as Aristotle navigates the Platonic and sophistic. For both, human being unites mood, comportment and expression first in the rhetorical speaking about things in everydayness.

In the closing chapter, I describe the reversal of rhetoricity in later Heideggerian philosophy of language, focusing on the “Dialogue on Language.”⁵¹ I argue that Heidegger essentially reverses the movement of the rhetorical, from given situation, to guiding claim, culminating in speaking with others. In the Dialogue, Heidegger consistently begins with shared speaking, then breaks the speaking apart in the face of what has been and will be, evacuating a

⁵¹ My interest in the Dialogue is aimed toward what the Dialogue says about Heidegger, not its claims about Japanese thought. As [Lin Ma](#) explains, Heidegger’s grasp of Japanese philosophy is tertiary at best. “Japan” in the Dialogue functions as a model for possible oppositional speaking. Confusing the Dialogue with a documentary account of Japanese Being creates a hall of mirrors. The Dialogue bears little resemblance to the actual hour’s conversation with Tomio Tezuka. Heidegger’s recounting of his early philosophy bears little resemblance to the lecture texts. The discussion of *Iki* bears little resemblance to Kuki’s *iki*, embodied by the courtesans of Meiji-era Kyoto. *The Structure of Iki* bears little resemblance to either “authentic” Japanese aesthetics or to the historical lived experience of courtesans. Rejecting the word in favor of the “real” being of the world makes the same metaphysical mistakes that this dissertation (and the Dialogue, for that matter) criticizes. Standing the word of Heidegger or Kuki against real “authentic” cultural reality (for example, [Pincus 77-8](#)) creates a hierarchy in which inferior speaking recedes into the background of real culture. We cannot find a place to see how a thing *becomes* a thing within a matter. Standing “real” Japan against Heidegger’s ignores the value of “inauthentic” words.

shared now with others in favor of Dasein's own now with Being. I suggest that the movement of speaking from a concern with logic in distinction to life (the problem Heidegger first tackles), to a concern with Saying in the face of absence and death (the Heidegger of the Dialogue) present the end stations the rhetorician must see between. As I have argued repeatedly, the rhetorical still remains. Over and over again, I have referred to rhetoric as a ground, the place where phenomenological destruction can go no further. For Heidegger, the Greek translation of the German *Grund*, the same *Grund* of *Grundbegriffe der Aristoschelein Philosophie* ("basic concepts" as "ground concepts" of Aristotelian philosophy), is the *hypokeimenon*. I have used the term "matter." The matter is the place—in time and region, being and doing—in which the thing is first encountered and can thereby *become* a thing in time.⁵²

What if we posit the rhetorical as Heideggerian ground? The place in which the very problem of Being first announces itself, before it is refined and clarified in the speaking of science, philosophy or even poetry, the sound of birds and wind and wandering against which silence arises? Heidegger in 1924 speaks of leaping from the rhetorical speaking of everydayness without return. However, all leaps, insofar as they leap at all and do not simply fall, return to the ground in landing. The *phasis*, the spoken claim against which Heidegger formulates his *kataphasis* or counterspeaking, remains the same throughout his work. In 1924, Heidegger argues that the conceptual arises both from the ground of, and in *opposition to* the rhetorical speaking of everydayness. Each iteration of Heidegger's speaking grows out of and attempts to break from everydayness. Heidegger may leap off into a radicalized speaking, name that radicalized speaking philosophy, then poetry, then silence, but the problems that each mode of

⁵² That the matter would be so easily rendered by most English translators as "subject" only serves to illustrate how speaking of being becomes a matter of logical procedure. *Hypokeimenon* as subject is rooted in Aristotle's logic, the base material toward which a predicate refers, that is then read further through a Latinization. But the matter is that which has arisen *in this case, here and now that is pressing and important*—it is a matter *that matters* in its capacity to change. Inert "subject," a placeholder in a logical system of organization, does not capture the temporal specificity of rhetorical matters.

language address are *always problems of rhetoricity*. The greatest problem, specifically, is that rhetoric returns to that from which it was born in everydayness, drawing all back into the present and public. In the rhetorical is your birth and death, where Dasein meets both itself and the Anyone. Even the Dialogue, aimed at it is in abiding with Being, may only abide with Being by first confronting everyday speaking.

Heidegger argues that the *hypokeimenon* is that which persists in Being. What if what persists, initially, generally and for the most part, is its everydayness? Its origin and falling away into bandied-about speaking? Its movement in life? The rhetorical jumps out and returns, always moving—and where there is movement, there is life. Though the fundamental premise that first animates Heidegger's reading of the *Rhetoric*, that the human being *speaks* the world, is later given up, the basic temporal structure of everyday speaking remains the same for Heidegger. He needs the structure to solidify the ground from which he leaps. It takes on different names: *ethos*, *pathos* and *logos*; concrete given basic situation, guiding look, prevailing intelligibility; comportment, disposition, speaking; understanding, mood, entanglement; solitude, finitude, world; mission, mandate, labor; message-bearer, message, and Saying. All maintain the same basic structure borne by the same *Grundbegriffe*. I part from Heidegger in the leap, and resolutely remain on rhetorical ground.

I will first establish the ground Heidegger builds from the *Rhetoric* in 1924 that underlies his leap to *Being and Time* in order to prepare for a critical reading of Heidegger's 1954 "Dialogue on Language," arguing 1) the Dialogue demonstrates that a speaking aimed toward poetic ends still must use rhetorical means to engage with and call into question the prevailing speech of everydayness, and 2) that while the Dialogue moves rhetorically, its culminating definition of the essence of language voids the ground for speaking in shared time. I close with a

discussion of rhetorical theory's own recursive conversation regarding the nature of rhetoricity. I isolate a moment in rhetorical history and theory when scholars grappled with rhetoric in light of the existential and phenomenological turn, wherein the rhetorical thing emerges yet again as a problem in light of the global social and philosophical upheaval of the late 60s. I conclude with remarks toward the future of rhetorical theory. At each turn, the basic question remains the same: what does it mean to call something rhetorical? How does rhetorical speaking make things present here and now in shared time, in such a way that those things bear both history and destiny?

From Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, Heidegger formulates what he calls a structure of "indigenous conceptuality" to show how concepts emerge from a ground in everyday speaking. And, while he does not continue to use the phrase, the structure of indigenous conceptuality—how human beings first bring things into words—remains in *Being and Time* and beyond. Indigenous conceptuality solves a problem that Heidegger wrestles with very early on in his academic career—the connection between the phenomenological world and the word.

Theodore Kisiel documents the concern with what Heidegger first calls "formal indication" in the 1919 KNS (or "war emergency semester," during the end of World War I). As Heidegger writes in his lecture notes for "The Idea of Philosophy and the Problem of the Worldview,"

Seen *in this way*, from the pre-worldly, understood from life in and of itself, the formally objective is no longer a *re-cept* [*Rück-griff*] but already a *con-cept* [*Be-griff*]. Radical displacement of the comportment that understands life-experience. Later to be clarified are: *re-cept* (motivation), *pre-cept* [*Vorgriff*] (tendency), *concept* (object). Pre-cepts and re-cepts ("sight"), prospective grips and retrospective grips ([KNS 98](#), emphasis in original).

The conceptual, Heidegger concludes, must arise from within a *hermeneutic* rather than structured formal intuition wherein the thing is grasped. Note that motivation, tendency and

object map cleanly onto rhetorical *pathos*, *ethos* and *logos*. The thing is not just in its material, historical actuality or its formal aesthetic conceptuality, but its possibility, within a temporal, historical context moved by a pre-existing motivation toward the future:

The empowering experiencing of living experience that takes itself along is the understanding intuition, the *hermeneutical intuition*, the originary phenomenological back-and-forth formation of the receipts and precepts from which all theoretical objectification, indeed every transcendent positing, falls out. [...] Life is historical; no dissection into essential elements, but connection and context ([KNS 99](#), emphasis in original, ellipses added).

As argued in chapter [two](#), Heidegger searched for an account of phenomenological presence that could grasp a thing in time. The relationship between Dasein and its world had to intersect not just with time, but with language. Time is how we say there is movement, and we are first moved to intend and attend. Thus to begin an account of phenomenological presence with intending begins in the middle movement between end stations. Heidegger wants to know what calls us, and moves us, to intend in the first place and toward what that intention moves.

6.2.2 Returning the concept to the ground of speaking in life

The *Rhetoric*'s weaving together of speaker, hearer and matter within a context of changing time, all borne by language, gave Heidegger the linkage he had been searching for. Even in 1919, Heidegger read Plato's philosophy as a reaction to the Sophistic position "that man, indeed, man in regard to his sensory perception, is the measure of all things. For this reason knowledge is impossible. There is only opinion (δόξα), which changes with time and circumstances" ([KNS 16](#)). Plato finds his own grounding in spirit, and method in dialectic. As Aristotle's critique described in chapter [three](#) shows, however, Plato's eidetic, dialectic turn cannot handle things

that in their essential being can be otherwise and in that mishandling renders the doxastic less-than-being.

Heidegger's structure of indigenous conceptuality reinterprets the art of rhetoric as a laying out of precept and receipt in speaking of things that re-historicizes the thing while also grasping the thing's possibilities. It is the way of speaking about these changeable things: "the possibility of seeing what at each moment speaks for the matter" ([BCArP 78](#)). The ability to see, in each given case, the available means of persuasion becomes for Heidegger the way that things emerge as capable of becoming conceptually definable in the first place—as things of speaking given in living and dealing with one another, our realest reality. Heidegger interprets "given case" as the concrete giving basic experience (receipt, in the language above), the "ability to see" as the guiding claim (precept), and the "available means of persuasion" as the prevailing intelligibility from which the thing arises and returns in interpretation (concept). Each are contained in the thing here now of which we speak, in the same way that the now itself contains before and after.

The concrete given basic experience refers to existence in the world already underway, as it is made factically present to one. The experience, then, has a primary orientation toward the past—the situation is already here, the case already given, one is already attending. "Being-in-the-world means *having the world there* in a certain way. Not only is the world had, but being-there *has itself in disposition*" ([BCArP 184](#)). Dasein finds itself, first in disposition but also in habituated choosing and prevailing ways of speaking. Dasein finds itself while being confronted by things that leap out of everydayness and become pressing precisely because they are *already* capable of being otherwise, drawing greater scrutiny toward the everyday. Things are this way now because they became otherwise than they should be. Things are this way now but they could

become another. Things are this way now, but they matter more or less. In dealing with things that can be otherwise, Dasein confronts itself as something that can be otherwise.

The guiding claim projects outward into the future “in *the terms of which* a being is addressed” ([BCArP 184-5](#)). The guiding claim refers to the *sense of being*—what makes the thing the thing, what makes the thing *what it is*. The Aristotelian teleological sense of being is “being-completed” or “being-present.” For Aristotle’s rhetoric, the claim is made complete and present in being-decided—the thing is not decided yet, is becoming decided, and the thing becoming-decided will do so differently depending on the temporality of the matter—whether the hearer must decide on matters of the past, present or future. The direction in which the discourse moves, as we grapple explicitly over the thing’s being-character, is laid out “in the sense of the explicitness of everyday seeing, considering, discussing” ([BCArP 185](#)).

The prevailing intelligibility brings the word to the ear of others, and makes the speaking a present thing for the hearer, but its claim only holds to a certain extent. As that which changes in time, the rhetorical is “thoroughly governed by δόξα [*doxa*]” ([BCArP 185](#), bracketed material added). The thing capable of being otherwise in shared time has broken with expectation and cannot be fully determined by the guiding claim. In order to be decided, the thing must be brought into familiarity from the unintelligible. Thus the world emerges from speaking, breaks from that world given in speaking, and comes back to it: “Familiarity is the standard of intelligibility that λόγος [*logos*] possesses, that proceeds from the ἔνδοξον [*endoxon*] and returns to it” ([BCArP 185](#), bracketed material added). Heidegger’s challenge is to construct a guiding claim capable of wresting the thing from its prevailing familiarity to its particular presence. This, Heidegger thinks, is the job of the philosopher.

The world in everyday speaking is already being interpreted, and its alreadyness maintains a temporal structure. The world is already here in *fore-having*, where Being is already within its world in “a determinate tradition of speaking, seeing, interpreting. Being-in-the-world is an already-having-the-world-thus-and-so” ([BCArP 186](#)) into which Being awakens and finds itself. We must then deal with the world already underway in a “definite way of addressing, in which the world is cared for, is discussed” ([BCArP 186](#)) as *fore-sight* which takes the world in a particular respect. In the face of unfamiliarity, the thing has already become problematic in both its fore-having and fore-sight (our normal business has been arrested and our common modes of dealing are made unsure). The unfamiliar is brought back into familiarity in expression with one another in terms of “the ἀποφαίνεσθαι [*apophainesthai*]—‘exhibited,’ articulated” ([BCArP 187](#)). *Fore-grasp* of the thing in its expression and prevailing intelligibility is articulated according to “a definite idea of a proof and of the conduciveness is guiding,” that is, a way of determining what is capable of speaking and dealing with the thing in which “[d]efinite possibilities of conceiving gain dominance; all others must be assimilated” ([BCArP 187](#)).

The rhetorical grounds of concrete, basic given experience and its fore-having (the subject of *Rhetoric* Book Two—how the matter is already before the hearer), guiding claim and its fore-sight (the subject of *Rhetoric* Book One—toward what decision the speaker aims that prescribes certain ways of dealing) and the guiding intelligibility and its fore-grasp (*Rhetoric* Book Three—the prevailing ways of speaking that circumscribe how the matter is to be articulated and the thing exhibited in presence) then give rise to conceptuality. As we have seen previously, the Greek emphasis upon speaking drew both Plato and Aristotle to develop modes of expression capable of pinning down the thing by determining what speaks for it and how it is to be spoken for. In its rhetorical form, the thing can be otherwise—it can be false. Both Platonic

dialectic and Aristotelian logic establish frameworks for proper expression of the thing in the form of concept, capable of determining truth and falsity and banishing its possible otherwiseness. The legacy of concept formation that focuses on the procedure for expression bring us to Kant, concerned with the modes of expression for things, but restricting those modes to logical procedure.

The rhetorical, then, is the mode of speaking that brings things back to their context in spoken, interpreted time—its past, present and future—that stands behind and authorizes acts of conceptualization. Rhetoric deals with talk about things, not talk about talk. The *Rhetoric* is valuable because in it, Aristotle directly addresses the fore-having, fore-sight and fore-grasp of speaking of things. Aristotle places awareness of concrete given basic situation, guiding claim and prevailing intelligibility under the remit of choice and art rather than procedure and logic—placing the speaking of concern under the remit of care.

Fore-having, fore-sight, and fore-grasp are, at the same time, *possibilities of something genuine. To explicitly appropriate the fore-having, to cultivate the fore-sight, and to carry through the fore-grasp, following this that is secured.* The conceptual is not something that comes forth from out of being-there and is somehow discovered in addition to it, but rather the proper possibility of the conceptual is just the conceptual as **apprehended interpretation of being-there itself** ([BCArP 188](#), bold added, italics in original).

The basic hermeneutic of Dasein itself, as Heidegger names the *Rhetoric*, apprehends the interpretedness of the world in word, prior to additional systems of definition and verification and thus *logos* prior to *logic*. As it speaks, the Being of rhetoricity both calls forth conceptuality in opposition to the rhetorical, *but also* makes the concept possible in the first place—a becoming aware of the act of interpreting from the doing and speaking itself, without system but not without art. Speaking lays the ground for thinking.

The *Rhetoric*, which takes speaking first and foremost as a problem—as something that itself can be otherwise—addresses things in their pre-givenness and works through that pre-givenness toward a choice.

Since the possibility of error exists, the fall from the genuine possibility of exhibiting and having-there of beings, and insofar as living is in turn determined by προαίρεσις [*prohairesis*, choice], living can *positively grasp the possibility of determining the being that is there in the way that it is*. This διανοεῖσθαι [*dianoesthai*, for Heidegger, being-oriented. More commonly, a process of thinking] as λέγειν τι κατὰ τινος [*legein ti kata tinos*, speaking of things or saying something about something⁵³] can be fulfilled so that it becomes a λέγειν καθ' αὐτό [*legein kath'auto*, speaking of Being] *in adapting to that which is genuinely present*, to that which is posited in the right regard, and so that the λόγος that is unconcealedly yields beings in their being, the *concept* springs from it ([BCArP 190](#), bracketed material added).

If Heidegger wants to make the concept a problem, to show what stands behind the concept and allows it—and Being itself—to be, he does so by implicitly following the structure of rhetoricity in order to then define philosophy in opposition. Heidegger does not reject the concept, he radicalizes the concept—this is as true in 1924 as in 1954. He cannot do so, however, without the apprehended interpretedness and temporal structure of spoken presence revealed in the *Rhetoric*.

And so, *Being and Time* is born. The structure of indigenous conceptuality becomes the speaking of care—our orientation and motivation toward the world. We are disposed to deal and care for the concrete given basic experience; we understandingly project in accordance with a guiding claim; we are entangled in the prevailing intelligibility of others. If indigenous conceptuality builds from the ground up, *Destruktion* runs the philosophical concept back to ground. Note that such a maneuver, reversing the direction of conceptuality, implicitly treats the philosophical concept as a *rhetorical* thing, made in speaking in the face of possibilities laid out in accordance with a particular time and situation. In doing so, the concept is stripped of its

⁵³ As Catalin Partenie ([45](#)) renders the phrase.

unequivocal capacity to define what is, and is instead taken as what speaks for matters in and for the moment.

What persists, in Aristotle's, Descartes' or Kant's logics, are the traces of disposition, comportment and shared speaking. Thrown into reverse, rhetoric becomes hermeneutics (a movement even Schleiermacher recognized), from interpretation to interpreting to interpreted along the path of language. *Destruktion* gives the concept back to the thing in time, as it is initially, generally and for the most part, and thus, Heidegger concludes, the *Rhetoric* acts as the fundamental hermeneutic of Dasein itself. I will now use the *Rhetoric's* hermeneutic to bring Heidegger's attempt to escape logic back to its own roots in *logos*, to take a speaking toward death back to a speaking from life.

In the Dialogue, Heidegger and his Japanese friend enact the difficulty of speaking. The Dialogue does not present a coherent theory of the nature of language so much as a meditation on what stands behind and enables our capacity to theorize or poetize at all. Think, then, of the critical reading to follow as a performance of reading out from rhetorical ground that attends to the projective comportment toward the thing that guides speaking, the disposition which first opens ourselves to the thing and moves us to speak, and the capacity of speaking to bring things to presence. What follows is a rhetorical encounter with the poetic word.

6.3 SPEAKING TOWARD DEATH

To read the Dialogue, I will follow the structure of rhetorical temporality worked out in chapters [three](#), [four](#) and [five](#). First, what is the thing and its matter, and toward what does the speaking aim? The first question concerns comportment toward the matter and the hearer (for Heidegger,

the guiding claim), so that one may properly take up the matter and move the hearer in service of the aim. Second, how has the thing come to be taken in disposition? The second question deals with what precedes the decision (the concrete given basic situation) and moves us to be concerned about the thing at all. Third, how is the thing brought to expression, from out of expectation and toward the aim? The final question then explores how the act of speaking makes the matter present and manifest before the hearer (the prevailing intelligibility) as that which can be otherwise in shared time.

As the interpretation will not strictly follow the narrative flow of the Dialogue (though the arrangement and narrative will be addressed in terms of the third question, making things manifest in speaking), I will begin with a brief summary of the Dialogue. A Japanese scholar has come to visit Heidegger, and the two engage in a conversation about the nature of language, seeking to find a way to address the fundamental unspoken—and indeed, unspeakable—ground that both East and West share. For Heidegger, the Japanese language presents a challenge to the prevailing modern European ratiocentric mode of thinking because it does not so readily define that of which it speaks. Heidegger argues that any way of thinking about language that takes language as the object (a speaking *about* language) rather than as that which gives rise—or indeed, refuses to give rise—to objectness (a speaking *from* language) misapprehends the nature of language. His argument is not to reject objectness or indeed the very metaphysical system on which objectness relies, but to see it properly as one possibility among others, only one piece of a fuller picture. To relate the movement to Heidegger's challenge to philosophers over the nature of language in *Being and Time*, Heidegger contended that philosophers must approach language as broader than structures of grammar or procedures of logic—philosophy, in other words, must be able to grasp language as it exists initially, generally and for the most part in

everydayness. In the Dialogue, the nature of language must be able to house many different everydays and many different houses of Being.

Why a dialogue? Looking to Plato for guidance, Drew Hyland argues that the dialogic form of philosophy allows for two possibilities of communication foreclosed by the traditional treatise. First, aporetic dialogues, which leave central problematics unresolved, keep the reader/hearer from forgetting to philosophize ([Hyland 39-40](#)). By creating an interaction between multiple contradictory views in which no satisfactory conclusion is reached, dialogue draws readers to make decisions for themselves. Second, dialogues make interpreting the text as doctrine more difficult ([Hyland 40-41](#)). Both aspects of aporetic dialogues, that they are unresolved and present no clear doctrine, put the reader in the position of having to make a choice over the matter arising, as a matter, from a concrete and particular interaction, rather than rely on the writer to claim what is. As a result, Hyland argues, the Platonic dialogue shows something beyond telling by eschewing doctrine and reminding the reader to philosophize.

The “Dialogue on Language,” I argue, aims toward the choice of refusal, absence and nothingness—to choose to allow the thing to manifest itself in a clearing from out of everydayness where no birds chirp and no wind blows. Such a choice cannot be asserted. The choice must arise from within the Dialogue, according to a particular temporality that unfolds throughout the conversation. The Dialogue reveals the literally “unspoken” possibility of refusing to decide and instead remaining silent. The Dialogue in this way is concerned not just of saying and what can be said, but with what is *worthy* of being said—of the things of which we speak. The past-oriented horizon stretches far back, while the future-oriented horizon remains close up, as Heidegger reflects upon his career in a way that unfolds slowly and cautiously. This temporal relation toward what stands beyond the word is brought forth in two ways in

expression: first in a heightened temporal focus on the moment, and the how of its dealing, in fear, and second in a long view of habituated choosing developed over a lifetime. Brought to word, the temporality is manifest in the recursive path of the Dialogue, which halts where the prevailing word fails the Being of language. The failing word is reapproached, opened up to otherwiseness and returned to the path of thinking. The result is a manifestation of language that speaks with a long (but highly selective) history, revealed in fleeting moments as a hint or gesture toward that which can never be fully spoken. In the point of refusal, Heidegger moves rhetorically to a moment where he may then renounce rhetoricity.

6.3.1 Toward the nature of language, away from what we say already

The Dialogue, as a whole, is concerned with building a particular comportment toward the process of thinking and speaking that shows language at work instead of taking it as an object. The Dialogue leaves the definition unfinished and aporetic: language lets things appear, and in that appearance, it shows itself: a “speaking *from* language [...] would be called *from out of* language’s reality, and be led *to* its reality” ([Dialogue 51](#)). As argued in chapter [three](#), a scientific comportment, by contrast, would seek to pin the thing down—the “it” of observation and definition, the predefined “reality” of the thing has been given in advance and is closed to otherwiseness. A traditional philosophical comportment, on the other hand, would foreclose what constitutes being—the “is” that constitutes the thing’s “reality” in philosophical definition. The former forecloses the “precept,” the latter the “recept.” In either case, the concept “language” in its predetermination would overwhelm the happening of language in speaking. By refusing to present the nature of language as concept, the Dialogue demands that the reader attend to how

the Dialogue speaks and not forget to philosophize. Precisely by refusing to name the “what” of the Dialogue, Heidegger keeps focus upon the “how.”

As observed in chapter [three](#), Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* begins with the question of comportment that aims toward the end: how to come to a decision about this thing here now that can be otherwise in shared time. Because one cannot make any solid claim to the is-ness of the thing since one is confronted with different possibilities, one works backwards from the possible end to how it comes to appear this way. What is of concern in the Dialogue is the possibility for the nature of language to *be at all* in speaking, and how it can become this way. As Heidegger will say of the relation between language and Being at the end of the Dialogue, the message-bearer comes from and has gone toward the message. The prologue to speaking in this way must await the nature of language in such a way that speaking can reveal this nature—we begin with the end, the thing seen in the moment of decision.

The matter must be brought forth in such a way that the thing appears capable of being otherwise and open to change in shared time. The aim for speaking then is to move toward choice over the possibilities of the thing. The matter first arises in the light of a choice yet to come, from out of its origin in a need for speaking. What is this need, and who is to choose? The shared time of the Dialogue is two-fold, appropriately: the afternoon shared between the Inquirer and Japanese friend takes place in a larger moment of time in which the discussion partners struggle. The modern era, a vast expanse taking up everyone who speaks within it, demanding ceaseless possession and extraction, becomes the primary temporality in which speaking emerges and toward which speaking bends. We rush toward a problem in the now, and give rushed solutions. The world is called for by, addressed according to, and validated by rushing in the

name of progress, all of which cuts off the temporal horizons of possibility of things and blinds us to otherwiseness.

Against prevailing temporal speaking of things, the Dialogue builds its oppositional stance. The discussion partners emerge in the speaking as thinkers, speaking in opposition to the larger public in which they themselves are implicated, and from which their own words have been born. In other words, the shared time of the Dialogue, in which the being of language first becomes a concern, acts as counterpoint to the broader shared time of the modern era. The conditions of the Dialogue are such that the participants have greater freedom to cut away the pressures of everyday life in order for the matter to slowly unfold and allow the thing to appear in the context of a particular conversation. Here we have a generality (the possible otherwiseness of the speaking of Being and the march of the modern era) encased in a particularity (Kuki's struggle, Heidegger's early lectures, the film *Rashomon*) that maintains a disposed, composed concrete facticity. The juxtaposition between relentlessly progressing Eurocentric temporality and the slower, back and forth temporality of the conversation opens space for language to be taken as otherwise. The rhetoricity of the Dialogue is the ground that both precedes and gives birth to its opposition.

The Dialogue both takes up and builds a comportment toward the Being of language—takes up as the conversation partners deal with the failure of their speaking, and builds in interaction by drawing together and falling apart. The speaking of the Dialogue is not cut off from its larger historical context. If it were so easy to compartmentalize authentic speaking from that of the everyday, the conversation would not be so difficult. Moving toward the aim demands a high level of circumspection, “weighing each word.” The comportment of speaking, and that toward which the speaking comports itself, guides the interpretation of that speaking.

In the Dialogue, Heidegger quotes from the beginning of Friedrich Schleiermacher's *Hermeneutics and Criticism* to explain his own early hermeneutic research:

Hermeneutics and criticism, both philological disciplines, both methodologies, belong together, because the practice of each presupposes the other. The first is in general the art of understanding rightly another man's language, particularly his written language; the second, the art of judging rightly the genuineness of written works and passages, and to establish it on the strength of adequate evidence and data ([Dialogue 9-10](#)).⁵⁴

Recall that Heidegger applauded Kant in 1924 for recognizing that definition is a methodological question of interpretation, not a pronouncement of essence, but lamented Kant's assignment of the method to logic. The being should lead the speaking rather than the other way around, which is why the *Rhetoric* begins by establishing the matters over which rhetoric presides and the things of which rhetoric speaks and the works outward. Schleiermacher himself maintains the connection between interpretation and speaking: "The belonging-together of hermeneutics and rhetoric consists in the fact that every act of understanding is the inversion of a speech-act, during which the thought which was the basis of the speech must become conscious" ([7](#)). The act of interpretation follows what was said back to the initial horizons of speaking. As an inversion of the speech-act, hermeneutics follow the speaking back to the being, as the rhetorical builds the being out of the speaking. Hermeneutics and rhetoric share a single movement running two ways, with world and word standing as end-stations.

In his turn to *Being and Time*, Heidegger takes the basic form of hermeneutics and follows the structure back to the Being: moving from the structure of time to that of care, and from speaking to Being. As Heidegger says in the Dialogue, "[i]n *Being and Time*, hermeneutics means neither the theory of the art of interpretation nor interpretation itself, but rather the attempt

⁵⁴ The wording above is from Peter D. Hertz's translation of the Dialogue. It differs slightly from the version of the passage in Andrew Bowie's translation of *Hermeneutics and Criticism* particularly over whether to render *Kunstlehren* as a "theory" or "methodology." While "methodology" has heavy technical academic overtones, I think it more closely fits *Kunstlehren* as not just a theory, but a theory of art, taken broadly as a systematic guide for doing or making.

first of all to define the nature of interpretation on hermeneutic grounds” ([11](#)). From the speaking that initially and generally attempts to speak to the changing world already present to interpretation in fore-having, fore-sight and fore-grasp, Heidegger then theorizes the being that interprets in mood, comportment and understanding. Rhetoric takes the world as already a matter of interpretation, and then works through the process of interpreting with an aim toward decision.

A problem remains. How does interpretation not rig the game, finding only what it already knows? In other words, if interpreting searches for the familiar amidst unfamiliarity, would we not simply replicate what we have seen and done before rather than speak to the thing here and now?

I: I shall be glad to do as you ask [to offer an “authentic” explanation of Heidegger’s use of “hermeneutic”]. Only do not expect too much. For the matter is enigmatic, and perhaps we are not dealing with a matter at all.

J: Perhaps rather with a process.

I: Or with what-is-the-case. But such terms will quickly land us in inadequacies.

J: But only if we already somehow have in view what our saying would want to reach ([Dialogue 11-12](#), bracketed material added).

The interrupted nature of the Dialogue slows interpretation in that it makes what speaks for the matter a problem. Beyond the obvious difficulty of attempting to understand the Japanese word for language without importing European conceptual baggage, circulated texts, half-remembered conversations, misreadings, hasty conclusions constantly call into question and bring to a halt the quick hermeneutic jump from unfamiliar to familiar.

In interpretation, we see language at work and in movement. Heidegger ties hermeneutics back to the Greek god Hermes, bringing “the message of destiny” ([Dialogue 28](#)) from the gods. Hermes does not speak directly. There is no conceptual system that bridges the abyss between the human and divine, only hints and gestures. The hermeneutic aim, then, is to make out what is being gestured toward from the gesture itself. The audience of the *Noh* play sees the mountain in

the actor's upraised hand when looking toward its peak, as Plato saw time in the heavens and Husserl time in the moving hand's comet-tail.

To speak to the otherwise, the rhetorical remains in the world of the hint or gesture. We believe, but do not know. The example hints—it bears the past we have already had forward as a possible guideline for understanding the present, as an incomplete suggestion. The enthymeme gestures out toward the future, leaving the hearer to see that toward which the enthymeme gestures. There is, in its “nearest nearness” which has in it both hint and gesture, an uncanny unfamiliarity “which we therefore quickly dismiss again from view, to stay instead with what is familiar and profitable” ([Heidegger, Dialogue 12](#)). Both require the beholder to see a mountain in an outstretched hand, to use an example from Heidegger's discussion of Japanese *Noh* plays. The difference, then, is in the ultimate aim. The aim for Heidegger is to let that being be, and to see its essence in the moment. The rhetorical aim is to grasp at the thing for the sake of dealing with a larger pressing, shared matter of concern and return to the familiar.

All decisions are ultimately decisions made in the name of good—good for something that is itself not yet, justice as the restoration of good from what has been, and the good as worthy of being spoken here and now. The Dialogue, which addresses the present with an eye toward past and future, aims for what is nearest and most worthy of being spoken of: language itself. What is most worthy of being spoken of is that which brings us to speak at all: “in it [what is “originarily familiar,” and “entrusted to our nature,” “known only at the last there is veiled all that is worthy of thought as such and as a whole” ([Dialogue 34](#)). The very best is to acknowledge one's own incapacity before Being, and accept one's role as messenger for Being. “The *will* to know does not *will* to abide in hope before what is worthy of thought” ([Dialogue 13](#)). We come to the thing in its moment not as judges but as messengers, grateful interpreters of hints and

gestures that herald the coming of Being. By awaiting such a coming, one bids farewell to the judge's claim: "it is..." ([Dialogue 54](#)). Before the thing, the word breaks off.

The rhetorical comportment of the Dialogue consistently recognizes and engages in incompleteness. The discussion partners, speaking in opposition to the prevailing talk of the time notice when their words are failing and respond by leaving the question open.

I: The transformation occurs a passage...

J:...in which one site is left behind in favor of another

I:...and that requires that the sites be placed in discussion.

J: One site is metaphysics.

I: and the other? We leave it without a name ([Dialogue 42](#)).

A speaking of language that faces its own incompleteness must enact that incompleteness and yield to mystery to show the thing appropriately. To see the incompleteness of language, we must take up a disposition that makes such incompleteness *matter*.

6.3.2 Being-moved to speak from language, recoiling from shared time

In comportment, Heidegger has called into question the capacity of inherited speaking (in a range from the specific text or quotation to the larger tendency for conceptual speaking to smuggle in a host of presumed relations) to express the nature of language. In disposition, the Dialogue is moved by both fear and a hope toward that which came before. Fearing the pitfalls of conceptuality, reason or metaphysics does not imply total rejection. The waylaid paths of thought can be returned to, and old texts reapproached in new lights. Next, I will show how the Dialogue brings forth that which has come before in mood, habituated choosing and ways of speaking.

The challenge for the Dialogue is to present that which is very close and easily missed as *heightened*—pressing in time—and *magnified*—prominent in the context of the matter. By heightening the matter in time, that the capacity to speak the very nature of language itself is

something that can be lost to time in the name of progress, the Dialogue builds its impulsion forward. There is a sliver of hope that the conversation might escape from European rationality, but escape is only possible with the greatest of care, for the greatest danger lies in our own speaking. In order to escape, we must focus the present field of view upon that which is best and most worthy of speaking, and ignore that which is unworthy of our precious time. Where the greatest danger is, the saving power also grows.⁵⁵

The heightening of the problem of language lays itself out in the interplay of fear and hope. Fear and hope stand in relation to one another as markers of the extent to which we are capable of pressing out upon the world, and the extent to which the world can press back. As discussed in chapter [four](#), fear gauges vulnerability to the world and others who share in that world, wherein the future—even our own possibility to be—comes into question. Yet, because continued being is still a possibility, indeed an imperative, fear is attended by hope that one still possesses some sort of agency to persist in being. In the heightened moment, one fears destruction and hopes for salvation.

The Dialogue begins with a note of fear, of dying too soon before one's time. Kuki has been arrested in the midst of his struggle to reconcile East and West, leaving the matter for Heidegger and his Japanese friend. Heidegger's own fear is that his time has not yet come—or that he will mistakenly, again, think that his moment for speaking the being of language has arrived, only to be proven wrong again. We await time, and yet time does not wait for us.

⁵⁵ As Iain Thomson argues,

“[t]he point of Hölderlin's salvific insight, as Heidegger understands it, is not that it is always darkest before the dawn, but instead that the new day is discovered in another way of experience the greatest darkness. Midnight, seen otherwise, *is* dawn. That sounds paradoxical, but Heidegger believes that we discover what saves us precisely by deeply experiencing what most endangers us” ([207](#)).

If the greatest danger is Dasein's ability to assimilate into the world and thus lose itself as the Anyone in rhetorical speaking that addresses the shared time and trade of everydayness, it is also the ground from which our alternative possibilities grow.

Sharing time with Being requires reconciling *its* time with *our* time. The macro-time of the modern era and its capacity to distort our relationship to language, resides in both the large-scale process of industrialization, and in the micro-time of over-eager students and thinkers seeking to possess the thoughts of others.

J: In the face of modern technicalization and industrialization of every continent, there would seem to be no escape any longer.

I: You speak cautiously, you say "...would seem..."

J: Indeed. For the possibility still always remains that, seen from the point of view of our Eastasian existence, the technical world which sweeps us along must confine itself to surface matters, and...that...

I:...that for this reason a true encounter with European existence is still not taking place, in spite of all assimilations and intermixtures. ([Dialogue 3](#))

The danger of the Dialogue twins the fears of ceasing to be in death and ceasing to be in life, through error, assimilation and intermixture. The danger speaks to the dark side of the two-fold of Being and beings—the prospect of Dasein’s own death and Dasein’s death in its being-with-others.

Hope, for Aristotle, is not a disposition, but a relation toward futural things that are not yet. Hope stands opposed to memory—both deal with the positive pressing presence of absence in different directions. As Aristotle observes, hope is concerned with the future as memory is with the past. In memory, something was and no longer is. In hope something may be and is not yet. For both, the question is not how someone stands disposed toward the present thing, but how the absent thing is given a kind of presence. Memory and hope mark the span of human temporality: things stand before the old in memory, before the young in hope.

Together, in fear the moment is heightened, and in hope it is awaited. The hope that language unites Being across houses presses the conversation partners forward. The hopeful await preservation and salvation from danger. Initially, conversation proceeds with difficulty. Kuki died, his project failed, Heidegger failed to understand Kuki, Kuki’s fellow students failed

to understand Heidegger. There has been no genuine encounter between East and West. As the conversation continues it eases, speeds up and begins sharing from one to the other.

I: I'm surprised that you see so clearly.

J: When I can follow you in the dialogue, I succeed. Left *alone*, I am helpless; for even the manner in which you employ the words "relation" and "use"...

I:...or better, the manner in which I *use* them...

J:...is strange enough.

I: I don't deny it. But it seems to me that, in the field in which we are moving, we reach those things with which we are originally familiar precisely if we do not shun passing through things strange to us ([Dialogue 33](#)).

Through the process of speaking, the moment of understanding comes into view—yet only in view. It is still awaited, not yet. Heidegger calls this a constant prologue, as the thinker and speaker prepare to encounter language without ever being able to fully speak the name of the essence of language. It is a thing strange to us, of which we have only hints and gestures.

For Heidegger, fear and hope name not only the disposition of the Dialogue, but more broadly of speaking to one another at all. The danger that we will be lost or misunderstood in speaking with others, or that we only hear what we expect and think what has been thought for us is attended by a hope that we might still understand one another after all. We may not understand completely, and our grasp upon being may be faulty, but there is in speaking always a promise of something better that awaits, and a salvation from what threatens.

Toward others, the Dialogue partners are disposed to admiration and contempt. Heidegger admires his interlocutor, Japanese language and art, and above all, language itself. His Japanese friend returns the sentiment. Admiration approaches the one who feels it from others. We judge ourselves against another, and find in the other something missing in ourselves. Admiration projects—it is oriented toward what we are not yet, creating pain, but it also drives forward to surpass ourselves. The Dialogue's speaking struggles to be *worthy* of language and

thinking. Admiration selects from the shared region of living, constricting but heightening the shared region to *what matters most*, which is very close yet still absent from grasp.

Admiration gathers together and honors while contempt exiles and derides. The contemptible are unworthy of admiration, and should be forgotten and left behind rather than carried on in time. The modern era has bad taste, and pursues its ugly desires without grace. Public concerns are superficial and should be disregarded. The definitional and hierarchizing capacities of European conceptuality have within them an unspoken tendency to admire and contempt; European thinking enshrines reason as divine, in whose light all speaking and thinking that would do otherwise becomes irrational. “The idolization of that divinity [Reason] is in fact carried so far that any thinking which rejects the claim of reason as not originary, simply has to be maligned today as unreason” ([Dialogue 15](#)). The danger again arises that failing to properly value, “we let ourselves be led astray by the wealth of concepts which the spirit of the European languages has in store and will look down upon what claims our existence, as on something that is vague and amorphous” ([Dialogue 2](#)). Allowing the conceptual to define what is real and present only serves to alienate Being from its engagement with its world, making the realest real into vagueness.

Both admiration and contempt magnify the shared region of concern, while fear and hope heighten the temporality of concern. From the wide field of the present, admiration selects *what matters* here and now, as desired and worthy of our time and struggle in terms of magnitude. What matters is the saying of language. Contempt cuts away *what does not matter*, further narrowing the view. What does not matter is public speaking.

Fear and hope sharpen the necessity of choosing well within the shared world, where my time and death are still my own. Any speaking that hopes to escape the limits of European

rationality must be undertaken with the greatest care to “weigh each word” and “examine whether each word in each case is given its—most often hidden—weight” ([Dialogue 30](#)). Together, fear, hope, admiration and contempt construct a temporal and regional closeness, in which Heidegger seeks to make the nature of language manifest in its prevailing form—a conversation between people.

There is one final key disposition that moves the Dialogue, and that toward which it is directed mark an important distinction between early and late Heidegger: kindness, *charis*.⁵⁶ In the Dialogue, Heidegger translates *charis* as “graciousness,” which gestures toward *iki* as “the breathlike advent of the stillness of delight” ([Dialogue 45](#)) and *koto* shows the delight found within the event. As shown in chapter [four](#), kindness allows one to take up the time of others toward whom one has no responsibility or obligation. The measure of kindness is determined by time rather than by the magnitude of the act itself—the small act of kindness, rendered at the moment of greatest need, is greater than the expansive act rendered without heightened need. The relationship of kindness here is between the messenger and the message, rather than between the messengers to one another. In our everyday life, dwelling is difficult: “[O]ur dwelling today is harassed by work, made insecure by the hunt for gain and success, bewitched by the entertainment and recreation industry.” The everyday, in other words, is “harassed by a housing shortage” ([Heidegger, “Poetically Man Dwells” 213](#)), leaving people to scramble for cover and comfort.

⁵⁶ Critics of Heidegger assert that his description of Shuzo Kuki’s *Structure of Iki* is so off-base, having nothing to do with the aesthetics of Japanese courtesans, that he could not have actually read the piece (see, for example, [Mikkelsen 116](#)). The invocation of *charis* suggests that Heidegger is engaged in a much more sly reinterpretation of *iki*. The Charites, or Graces, are protectors of human fertility and flourishing. Young Aglaea is shining, brilliant and adorned with splendor. Middle Euphrosyne is joyful and laughing. Eldest Thalia shares her rich abundance. Compare to Kuki’s three main dualistic constituents of the courtesan’s sense of *iki*—splendid, beckoning coquetry, a dashing, courageous and witty spirit of pride and honor, and a resignation that understands her fulfillment comes from herself and not from men’s desire for the moment. Together, they unite in the courtesan’s own supreme grace and beauty of *iki*.

Heidegger argues in “Poetically Man Dwells” that *charis* marks the dwelling of Dasein with poetic language, where the human being reconciles its scramble against the unhurried—indeed, *timeless*—divine and becomes at home in “dwell[ing] humanly on this earth” (229):

[*Charis*] has come to the dwelling being of man, come as the claim and appeal of the measure to the heart in such a way as the heart turns to give heed to the measure. As long as this arrival of kindness endures, so long does man succeed in measuring himself not unhappily against the godhead” (“[Poetically Man Dwells](#)” 229).

The capacity to expand one’s region of concern to include that of others becomes the capacity to include in that region the speaking of language, and to speak in turn. The expanded dwelling place of the poetic that invites in and gives, offers room for East and West to dwell together in gracious thanks to language.

The Dialogue takes place in the autumn of Heidegger’s life. His horizon toward the past is now longer than his future. The Dialogue consistently recalls, without bitterness, the past rashness of youth present now in memory. Impelled by the question of language and so eager to take it on that he underestimated its size and scope, the young Heidegger went too fast and looked too far into the future, missing what was in front of him. Excited by the new possibilities of German philosophy, Kuki and his friends snapped up phenomenological concepts and set to work without asking if those concepts were capable of expressing the things at which they aimed. Even across houses of being, youth lives in hope.

We cannot reject our youth as unworthy of us. For Heidegger, only in the audacity of youth could he have thought himself up to the task of asking the question of language or speaking the name of Being. Heidegger describes his young rashness, which aimed well but faltered in practice: “I knew only the most immediate short-range perspectives along the path, because they beckoned to me unceasingly, while the horizon shifted and darkened more than

once” ([Dialogue 6](#)). Now older, Heidegger sees his early work as valuable insofar as it pursued a noble question, with a sharper eye toward the barriers that might limit his capacity to answer. As Heidegger quotes Hölderlin: “For as you began, so you will remain” ([Dialogue 7](#)).

Age teaches that things often turn out badly. Each leap forward was a misstep, leading Heidegger to return over and over to the beginning, the initial question of the connection between word and world, and answer anew.

I only know one thing: because reflection on language, and on Being, has determined my path of thinking from early on, therefore their discussion has stayed as far as possible in the background. The fundamental flaw of the book *Being and Time* is perhaps that I ventured forth too far too early ([Dialogue 7](#)).

The recursions of the Dialogue replicate the easing of youthful brashness into hesitancy “when slowness rests on shy reverence” ([Dialogue 28](#)), one that does not come all at once but rather arises slowly over continual attempts to rethink. Such a cycle of renewal, however, cannot go on indefinitely. We will cease to be—and in the autumn of life, that ceasing becomes an increasingly real, present possibility. Kuki died too soon, still in the midst of his struggle, and the unspoken possibility is that Heidegger will die as well before answering the question he has pursued since he was a boy. As the possibility of ceasing to be becomes more real, the older turn to preserving things they have against changing time, so the thing stays when the person goes. The realm of shared time, particularly shared time that faces the future, constricts. Though the broad danger of European rationality looms across the globe, it is not the globe running out of time so much as it is Heidegger himself.

Heidegger’s ultimate aim, however, is not to answer once and for all. In the recursions through an eager youth to a pensive middle age, Heidegger slowly eases his ardor. His conclusion presents a resignation before the moment—that he will never say speak the nature of language entirely, and that such a desire would itself be not simply impossible but wrong. The

nature of language cannot be spoken in “theorems and cue words,” but reveals itself in its vast distance. Heidegger will only have hints and gestures. The memory of past failure tempers youthful hope before the moment. The moment too is something that can be lost and must be protected, and the act of protecting itself through careful speaking honors the valuable while turning away from the unceasing movement and change of shared time.

Danger and hope both lie in speaking that has come before. To a certain extent, Heidegger concedes, the tendency to see things as already pre-defined by language is an inevitable outcome of the basic movement of language to be able to solidify a contemporaneous region and time. The problem, instead, is that the European mode of conceptual thinking defines the world too sharply, resigning any counterspeaking to irrationality, and in so doing, cuts off the capacity to see things as possibly otherwise. Such defining and splitting off is further moralized, moving from what is to what ought to be. To stand against such speaking is to fight against goddess Reason. The origins of conceptuality and conditions under which logic first becomes a possibility are left behind, or reappraised in terms of the present without giving heed to what they meant in the past. In its backwards-facing movement, Heidegger attempts to both correct prior misunderstandings and to return the concept to its root, for example, challenging the easy metaphysical split between appearance and reality, and then reinterpreting “appearance” as *phainomenon* to refer to the clearing in which appearance arises, thinking “what the Greeks thought in an even more Greek manner” ([Dialogue 38](#)).

The speaking emergent from the comportment and disposition of European conceptual temporality predetermines its future possibilities, present being, and past acts. Sure of its own possession of the world in its desirability, virtue and practice, European conceptuality contains within it its own rigid definitions not simply of truth (beings defined by logical procedure), but

of beauty (the aesthetic valuing of the marketplace) and goodness (the triumphal march of civilizing progress). Understanding reason as a being of perfect order, it is assured of its own capacity to order perfectly. The modern era cares only for its own time.

Heidegger wonders if the prevailing way of speaking allows language to be anything more than a system of orders (logic) and labels (words). As he is aimed toward what is worthy of speaking, and that speaking is present, the Dialogue must wrestle with itself—there is not something that has been lost and awaits finding, but something here and now, present with us. It is the thing from which we move and think (the inductive *arche* which begins with the thing and thinks out of it). That movement is a problem of relation in time, where we are already underway and aimed toward something. To dwell with language is to see from what it has come and toward what it seeks to go. When language is boiled down to theorems and cue words, it loses the sense of relation between messenger and message and becomes inert and lifeless, an object only.

To bring language into doubt, the Dialogue reverses the movement of enthymematic speaking, in order to reveal what is missing and cannot be said rather than move the listener along quickly. At the moment when an enthymeme normally breaks off and allows the hearer to complete the speaking, the Dialogue suddenly halts. The missing cannot be filled in, and the distance cannot be leaped over. The speaking that completes the enthymematic movement fails to show what we mean. Such a shift radically changes the nature of temporality. Traditionally, the enthymeme moves the listener along, and keeps attention to what “nearly concerns the audience,” whereas the Dialogue trips up and resists the tendency for prevailing speaking to draw us away from the thing.

Such a movement is different from an enthymeme, but not alien: it is the movement of counterspeaking against enthymemes. Counterspeaking in these instances focuses on a particular point of contention rather than the whole of speaking, constricting the focus on the word as fear, hope, admiration and contempt constrict the time and region of concern. Each halting brings the unseen movement of speaking into view and makes that movement conspicuous. The enthymeme does not perform logical magic—it succeeds or fails based on its accordance with the thing here now. The recursive structure of the Dialogue reveals where the speaking has failed to grasp that of which it speaks and becomes hesitant.

To what is Heidegger against? Against the easy movement of definition (the apparent definition) that takes the thing for the word, missing the relation between the two in time. People misuse the dwelling-house as “a shelter erected earlier somewhere or other, in which Being, like a portable object, can be stored away” ([Dialogue 26](#)) when the emphasis is instead in the *doing*—the *dwelling* within the house, the making-possible of Being in that which houses it. Ultimately, Heidegger is against the belief that not simply the concept, but the very word itself is capable of holding all of Being. Instead, language brings us into a relation with Being that acknowledges the distance between the word and the world. To founder before language is to also attest to the vastness, the great magnitude of language, and walk “the boundary of the boundless,” seeking “the boundary’s mystery” ([Dialogue 41](#)). In the final section of the analysis of the Dialogue, I will show how that mystery arises in the course of speaking.

6.3.3 Speaking the presence of language, being silent about silence

Giving to language means attending to how that language allows the thing to rise to attention and become manifest as it is. Thusfar, I have drawn this interpretation of the Dialogue from

comportment and disposition: how language, as something that can be otherwise in the shared time of Heidegger and his Japanese friend, is to guide our encounter with language in speaking, and how the present arises in the context of Heidegger's struggles (and failures) to speak the nature of language in the past. I will close with a consideration of how the speaking itself draws together the futural aim and past ground to bring language to presence. Having explained toward what the Dialogue moves, and how it is moved to do so, we must address the movement of speaking itself.

Speaking first manifests things in the sound of the voice. The Dialogue gives us no true sound, of course, as a written text. As a dialogue, however, the text attempts to show language in the movement of speaking from person to person, in both how that shared speaking builds a world and in where the speaking leaves off. As the Japanese friend says of a genuine investigation into the nature and essence of language, "a speaking *from* language could only be a dialogue" ([Dialogue 51](#)). Only in a dialogue could the struggle to speak together be made manifest. The voice here prompts the discussion from without, drawing the conversation partners along, that itself cannot be said:

J: It is that undefined defining something...

I: ...which leaves unimpaired possession of the voice of its promptings.

J: At the risk that this voice, in our case, is silence itself ([Dialogue 22](#)).

Even the text itself gestures toward voices speeding up and slowing down, as seen above, where the inquirer and his friend begin to finish one another's sentences. Voices raise and quiet, and in so doing take up the thing as moving in time and space, quickening and slowing, reaching far and coming close.

Yet *how to speak* is up for grabs in the Dialogue. It has no solace in style, understood rhetorically as ways of speaking in a region that allow the thing to meet prevailing expectations.

Indeed, style is itself a problem, as the participants struggle to address the deceptive clarity of their own speaking. The Japanese students quickly take up hermeneutics and then realize that they are not sure what it means, as Heidegger himself realizes he has little sense of *iki*. Heidegger must make that which *conveys* clarity and makes the world sensible, which interprets at the most fundamental level when it turns world to word, itself unclear at the very closest quarters.

Rhetorically, speaking of the present aims to illuminate that present, and so any distance or lack of clarity makes the speaking itself conspicuous and questionable. There should be no great departure from what is already expected by the hearer. Making the speaking conspicuous is precisely Heidegger's aim. There *is* something broken off here, something more admirable and mysterious that surpasses ourselves and that we must honor. By placing two speakers with radically different styles of speaking in dialogue, the space between houses and abyss between *res extensa* and *res cognitans*, is present as mystery—absent to present possession, not yet and maybe not ever, but still presently beckoning one to engage.

Heidegger's moments of arrest occur where the styles of speaking that allow things spoken of to be present clearly and directly, as though there were no space between world and word, come into conflict. The thing can be otherwise, and it need not be decided. The German tendency to define falters before the Japanese willingness to leave the thing unsaid. We may linger in wonder before a mystery. We can follow hints and gestures without grasping onto what is here and now and forcing a decision (even a decision that remains revisable).

There is a bridging between styles first in simile, which allows for both sameness and difference by asserting a relation between different things. The clothes of Kuki and his wife bear hints that “made the Eastasian world more luminously present” ([Dialogue 4](#)). Quiet moments in

Rashomon, where a hand rests for a long time, bring stillness into the otherwise propulsive and demanding filmic frame. The movement of a hand in the *Noh* play that reveals a mountain gathers world-making meaning in a small gesture. The vastness of difference and extreme, focused presence in stillness are likened to “the intermingling scent of cherry blossom and plum blossom on the same branch” ([Dialogue 53](#)).

The beckoning similes merge in metaphor, moving from hints of what language *is like* to a gesture toward what language is. Thus the naming of language is a metaphor—itsself the building of new relations in language that extend its possibilities, and does not directly define but has at its heart an enigma that invites the hearer to think.

J: But who today could hear in it an echo of the nature of language which our word *Koto ba* names, flower petals that flourish out of the lightening message of the graciousness that brings forth?

I: Who would find in all this a serviceable clarification of the nature of language ([Dialogue 53-4](#))?

The extension does not own the thing, and in the space in between we move back and forth between the known and the enigmatic, between the message-bearing and message. The naming then is also a performance of honoring language, and it is built in such a way so that one must have gone through the recursions before the speaking has enough room to be both knowable and enigmatic. The inviting enigma draws one “into the prologue to a messenger’s course” ([Dialogue 53](#)). The course of the Dialogue severs old connections and rebuilds new relations that allow the central mystery of language to be.

Metaphor spans a distance, but its range is not infinite. The further the distance between things—the thinner and more fragile the relation between them—the greater the enigma of that relation. The Dialogue’s metaphor spans the concrete aesthetic and the essence of language itself that resides beyond speaking. The relation connects the speaking of the Dialogue with the

speaking of language it is designed to honor. The relation also spans temporalities, as the thing that is language becomes otherwise in speaking, changing from the initial, general everyday to something fleeting and blooming and exploding from out of the surroundings. The petals falling from blossoms present both a very human temporality—the temporary and finite—and a temporality that stretches out beyond us in the branch and tree that bring the blossom forth.

The metaphor, which here blooms as the speaking of the essence of language, grows from the preceding conversation. The Dialogue moves away from theorems and cue words toward the mystery of the blossom. In the rhetorical, metaphor draws the particular to a captureable moment of mystery, a sort of leading enigma. Here the metaphor links itself to something not quickly grasped. It is not a mystery to be solved or dealt with, but to be abided with—it is to be awaited rather than decided.

The metaphor must be beautiful and alive, suited to the eyes and showing the world at work—it is present to sense and life in movement and change. The blossoms bloom and unfurl, then the petals wither and fall away. Their scents mix together. There is a balance then between the according with expectation (even in sensorial terms) and the opening of a mystery at its heart that compels one to wonder at the here and now. Yet alone, without the preceding conversation, the metaphor would be dead. Its hinted meaning beyond the general familiarity with flowers and blossoms on tree branches to the heart of language would remain entirely veiled to the hearer. To a certain extent, this is by design. Heidegger has already lamented the abuse of his phrase “the dwelling-house of Being.” Now he has given a new interpretation that cannot be easily excised and bandied about. A poetic rendering that emerges from dialogue does ensure that one goes along a way with the conversation, while the speaking of everyday concern with others does not have the luxury of whiling away time and abiding with mysteries.

Metaphors are no mere formal compositional figures, but are rather ways of illuminating things, here and now. Metaphors must show, in relation, the matter's mattering (giving weight to the weighty and making light of the trifling), disposition toward the matter (attachments are properly thick or thin) and comportment toward the matter (judging and speaking well). The hearer moved by the Dialogue, however, is restricted and delimited, not open to the general public who shares in traffic and trade. Both Heidegger and his Japanese friend give great weight to language, as a philosopher for Heidegger's part, and as a translator of poetry for the friend, and are in this way also disposed to care about proper comportment toward the matter.

The dialogic format allows the interlocutors to focus on one another, contrasted together against the Anyone, giving little weight to public concern and much to the unfolding conversation in the present. I do not mean that the Dialogue *ignores* public concern, but that it is weighed, found wanting and then is stripped of its possession of speaking. The temporality of everydayness, while inescapable, is incapable of accessing and manifesting the essence of language due to its quick leaping from pre-judged appearance to pre-given expression. The capacity of language to turn the thing into an object with each assertion of "it *is*" is less the fault of a specifically European rationality and more a property of language writ large. Within the circumscribed shared time of the conversation, Heidegger and his friend oppose speaking of things in their temporal everydayness in favor of awaiting the time for speaking. When faced with the pressing necessities of everyday life—the friend is due to catch a train to Florence—the trip is simply rescheduled. The interlocutors submit themselves to the time of the Dialogue.

The rhythm of the Dialogue, first staccato with misunderstanding, then flowing between participants, reveals the speakers coming into accord. Coming into an accord is a process that unfolds over time. Refusals become answers, and the process of refusal makes manifest the

incompletion of speaking in a movement between synthesis (gathering together) and division (the message bearer and the message).

I: Then, man, as the message-bearer of the message of the two-fold's unconcealment, would also be he who walks the boundary of the boundless.

J: And on this path he seeks the boundary's mystery...

I: ...which cannot be hidden in anything other than the voice that determines and tunes his nature ([Dialogue 40](#)).

The two dialogue partners are able to speak to one another, and also remain silent as they listen to the voice of the message that “tunes his nature.” The hint and gesture play out the movement of accord and refusal. Each hint or gesture allow for a limited attachment to and illumination of the thing, but only to an extent. Both hints and gestures are significant in their incompletion and demand further thought. However, in its increasing accord, the Dialogue's speaking loses a sense of life. In the time of life, there is a struggle to share time and place that drives us to make a choice. In the awaiting, abiding time of poetic speaking of things may reveal the mysteries within speaking, but it does not address the mysteries of living. The conversation partners struggling with such world-historical problems like the universal essence of language need not worry themselves about petty problems like the next scheduled train to Florence. The departure is introduced only to be immediately waved away as a false problem. How easily are the difficulties of everyday life ignored, and movements of life stilled!⁵⁷

Let us look at the arrangement of the Dialogue. The exordium sounds a keynote. From the opening, the time and region have been limited, heightened and magnified. The exordium introduces a direction toward the end, both in terms of the struggle with language and the particular attempt to understand *iki*. Heidegger's admission that “[i]n my dialogues with Kuki, I

⁵⁷ Heidegger's simple rescheduling of the train trip is arguably *less* interventionist in its pushing away of pressing concern than in a previous attempt at dialogue-writing. In Heidegger's 1944 “Ἀγχιβασίς: A Triadic Conversation on a Country Path between a Scientist, a Scholar and a Guide,” the conversation participants wish to end the walk, as night is falling and the trail is becoming hard to follow. Miraculously, their way is literally illuminated by the strength of the speaking ([CPC 46-7](#)).

never had more than a distant inkling of what the word [*iki*]” ([Dialogue 2](#)) broaches the larger question: can a genuine encounter between European and Eastasian existence take place at all? The exordium makes the matter close, important, astonishing, agreeable, close to home—these are what matter in presence. It projects in importance, that the modern era has alienated Dasein from its house of Being and makes dialogue between houses impossible. The exordium also reflects on something that is before and acts upon us—in the present, we are imprisoned by our own speaking and swept away by technicalization and industrialization.

Narratively, the Dialogue follows a recursive path, as I have argued, which begins with concern toward a problem, initiates an investigation of the possibilities therein, and then halts its progress in the face of misunderstanding. The two basic recursions of the Dialogue deal with language in its temporal being: that which lies before the thing and guides interpretation in advance in expression, and that which projects from interpretation and determines what one sees in appearance for the sake of something.⁵⁸ Interpreting Japanese art with European aesthetic concepts presumes that the object of aesthetic analysis can be split, for example, into sensuous content and suprasensuous form, and determines the thing’s reality out of an accordance between that content and form. In the first half, the Dialogue shows where our prevailing speaking fails to interpret and behold Being in expression, and in the second, the Dialogue reapproaches and refigures interpretation and appearance in such a way that a genuine encounter between houses of Being can take place. In the first, what has been said is an impediment to thought, in the second, a resource for thinking.

⁵⁸ That the two major concerns for the Dialogue would be the interpretation of expression and appearance helps to explain one of the more baffling aspects of the Dialogue—that Heidegger would repeatedly misidentify one of his own lectures. Heidegger twice titles the seminar “Appearance and Expression,” and says it is from 1920, when the lecture is instead [Phenomenology of Intuition and Expression](#), and is from 1921. Heidegger is not identifying a particular course that happened at a particular time, but rather is marking a consistent concern—a way of thinking—evident even in his earliest works.

The first half of the Dialogue deals with the tensions between interpretation and appearance, and halts whenever the conversation begins to project into appearance that which it already presumes to know in interpretation. The conversation slowly strips away and undermines the prevailing European hermeneutic and aesthetic conceptual vocabulary. The hermeneutic is no longer seen as a procedure for interpretation, but a gathering of a bearing toward the thing, shifting the emphasis from what the interpreted thing *is* toward *how* the interpreter is called to stand in relation with the interpreted. The interpreter becomes a message-bearer drawn to a message revealed in hints. In turn, the aesthetic is no longer a question of *what* appears, but *how* the appearance bears itself toward the beholder revealed in gesture. Rather than rush forward the discussion partners hesitate, hint, gesture and question.

At the midpoint of the Dialogue, Heidegger asks his friend what the Japanese word for language is—but it is too soon to give an answer. Heidegger leaves the question to ripen, and returns to the topic of hermeneutics. In returning, first to hermeneutics, then to appearance, Heidegger re-roots both terms in the Greek, then proceeds to radicalize each meaning—to think more Greek than Greeks. *Hermeneuein* brings a message of tidings from the gods. The task of hermeneutics, now, is to see that message of Being in the beings bearing the message. We should, in other words, see hints of Dasein itself “in the presence of present beings” ([Dialogue 30](#)). *Phainomenon* means not just appearance itself, but the clearing that gives rise to appearance and beckons Dasein to behold it. Rather than *familiarize*, interpretation now hints toward the uncanny and mysterious, and rather than *realize*, appearance beckons and gestures from across a vast distance.

The disjoint in the presence of language, then, is between the capacity of hermeneutics to bear the message and the capacity of appearance to show the message. The danger of the

hermeneutic is one of assimilating unique Being into an alien vocabulary, and the danger of the aesthetic is one of assuming that presence is always bifurcated between sensuous and suprasensuous, reality and appearance. The tension, then, is between an interpretive process that acknowledges its incompleteness and a presumption then that there is a realm of super-Being that the interpretation of appearance cannot reach. Used without care—when one goes too fast—hermeneutics presents the thing in the shape of the already-known familiar, and aesthetics presents the thing as what it is in projection according to the rigid guide of transcendent principle or form that determine its reality.

Heidegger's metaphoric radicalizing of the concepts *hermeneuein* and *phainomenon* is not the same as a rejection of conceptuality. Recall that in BCAP, Heidegger argued that genuine originary conceptuality comes from a careful attendance toward comportment, disposition and speaking. In Heidegger's radicalized telling, a speaking from language does the same—one attends to gathering a bearing toward the message (interpretive comportment), in being drawn to a beckoning radiance (aesthetic disposition), brought together in bearing the message of Being to and with beings (speaking from language).

I have spoken, you have heard, here is what is, now decide. Epilogue prepares for the final saying, in disposition, comportment and amplified or minimized presence. Epilogue temporalizes the final saying, establishing the now in alreadyness, aim and presence. The hearer must be brought to stand before the choice, and in that moment the whole temporal movement of the speaking, the thing in its temporalized matter, is brought into presence. Already engaged with the thing, the hearer is drawn toward and away through the course of speaking, finally faced in presence with a decision over what is here and now.

The thing has “opened itself to the messenger’s course and shone upon it” ([Dialogue 54](#)), that is, the dialogue has shown our comportment—our course—toward language through the speaking of language. The hearer standing before the speaking has learned to hear the “echo of the nature of language which our word *koto ba* names” and is “drawn into the prologue to a messenger’s course” ([Dialogue 54](#)). Drawn to the course opened by the thing, the speaking now stands before what is: “the coming of what has been.” In the rhetorical decision, the movement of rhetoricity wherein the thing could be otherwise terminates in decision that lays claim to what is. In the Dialogue, however, the choice is one of letting go of “it is.” By taking “some steps along a course” (acting projectively toward the future), having already been “drawn into the prologue to a messenger’s course” (being-moved retrospectively), the dialogue partners are within language in such a way that it is impossible to make a claim toward isness outside of language. The being of language gathers together in speaking what “endures as what grants endurance”—our claims toward language are made possible by language.

Is there, however, not still a choice being made? Rather than understand the Dialogue as that which leads us to a choice over the being of language—to be able to say “language is”—the choice is instead to understand the relation between message and messenger. *What* endures is not the end-point, the *it is*, but is instead the beginning-point for following back to what grants endurance. We say farewell to “it is,” and pass beyond. Kuki, his friends and the young Heidegger all rushed to claims of “it is,” either the is-ness of Japanese art or Dasein’s language. The choice is one of waiting and stilling anything that might press upon one to make a claim to being—the choice of refusal to speak.

6.3.4 The break away from rhetoricity

Where has the rhetorical broken off in Heidegger's "Dialogue on Language?" I want to look more closely at Heidegger's metaphoric approach to language with an eye toward the metaphor's specific sense of temporality. First, recall the metaphor for language. Language is moved by *iki*, "the pure delight of the beckoning stillness" ([Dialogue 44](#)) and "that which in the event, itself, that which uniquely in each moment comes to radiance in the fullness of its grace" ([Dialogue 45](#)). Within the event moves "appropriating occurrence of the lightening message of grace" ([Dialogue 45](#)). From its radiant occurrence, the message brings forth. The message and messenger come together in "the happening holding sway" ([Dialogue 47](#)). The happening shelters "all that flourishes and flowers" ([Dialogue 47](#)). And from the happening stem the "flower petals that flourish out of the lightening message of the graciousness that brings forth" ([Dialogue 53](#)).

Begin with the flower petal. Tomio Tezuka explains that *kotoba* connects the happening of a matter. *Koto* is a matter that happens, with the multiplicity and denseness of leaves on a tree ([Tezuka 60](#)).⁵⁹ The flowers are in the midst of becoming, flourishing and growing forth, but in their blossoming already begin the path to fallenness and decay. The blooms leap out from the surrounding, drawing in attention and causing one to stop and behold them, arrested by their *appearance*. The beholder both attends to the blossoms, serving their beauty, and in that

⁵⁹ The word brings to mind medieval drawings of Rhetorica, one of the seven liberal arts, from whose mouth both a flower and a sword grow. Reportedly, when Tezuka explained the meaning of *kotoba*, Heidegger replied "Very interesting! In that case, Herr Tezuka, the Japanese word for 'language,' *kotoba* can mean *Ding*." Tezuka continues, "There was perhaps an element here of forcing the word in a preconceived idea, but I was not in a position to contradict this interpretation. 'Perhaps one can say that,' I replied. 'In my opinion, it could mean thing [*Ding*] as well as affair [*Sache*]' ([60](#))." Tezuka's response to Heidegger indicates that the heavy temporal emphasis of this dissertation, that a thing arises in a temporal matter, is closer to Tezuka's own interpretation of *kotoba* than is Heidegger's.

attending acts toward the blossoms. In the flower petals, we are confronted by language that in its presence beckons and arrests. The beholder cedes time to the beheld and is moved by it.

In their flourishing, the flowers have come from that which precedes them: they follow a happening in advance and are enabled by the happening. Something has called the beholder to attend to the flower already, and in that attending the flower appears. That which has called is the “lightening message.” This message itself moves—it has a disposition that calls the beholder into that disposition. From kindness comes kindness. Kindness gives of another’s time in a moment of need. The flowering gives stillness to the beholder, a refuge from the homelessness in the modern era that estranges Being from speaking. Language beckons us to the world in its presence, but only if we still ourselves in response in order to hear what it Says.

The pure presence of the flowering in the now—present though not complete—brings forth. What does it bring forth? More flowering, an ever-coming now where kindness, as Sophocles writes, ever brings forth kindness (cited in “[Poetically Man Dwells](#)” 266). A constant prologue. Each flower may fade, but a new grows. More arrest, more stillness. The beholder gives time to beholding, and the beholding in turn. We stay and await the message, to then bear that message in a continual flowering, in each unique moment. In these moments, Dasein’s full Being with language finds a home in which to dwell.

The metaphor emerges near the end of the Dialogue, and we must take into consideration the path along the way. The progression of the Dialogue slowly removes prior senses of backward and forward-facing orientations toward the world. Heidegger strips away at hermeneutics, slowly rebuilding the concept as that which responds to the beckoning message, and appearance in the forward-facing, as that which makes a clearing for the thing to appear.

Perhaps the attentive reader already heard alarm bells go off, when I argued that Heidegger's argumentative recursions redefine hermeneutics away from the familiar toward the mysterious, and appearance away from the realizing (or, in the Aristotelian sense, *actualizing* as seeing in the movement of life) toward the clearing. For it is in familiarizing and "actualizing" that we gain purchase on the rhetorical thing that can be otherwise. In the moment of decision, the thing is judged in accordance with our reflective familiarity (what it has been) and projective possibility (what it could feasibly become) from out of our everyday experience feeling, dealing and speaking.

To allow the metaphor to be in its pure presence as a beautiful mystery we do not seek to solve, Heidegger has removed all additional content that would have otherwise anchored the metaphor in everydayness. He has asserted his claim upon the thing at the cost of any that might challenge it—others do not hear, unless they hear as he does. The radiant moment of appearance will occur only on his own terms. The temporality of the metaphor, therefore, is one oriented away from the time of life shared with others, toward the time of death, which is always Dasein's own.

Each aspect of the rhetorical speaking of things—comportment, disposition and speaking—has been shifted by the metaphor from a *shared* to a *singular* and indivisible temporality where there is no demand for speaking at all. In comportment, the beholder is defined in relation to the beheld. The beholder's everyday concern is immediately eclipsed by the shining beauty of the flower, and the hold of that concern is ceded to the word. One stops, then waits. The ceding is a kindness to the thing, that gives its time back in return. Speaking then serves to bring the appearance into being, always coming. When one is arrested, there is no turning back, no return to the world of concern—indeed, it is only the stilling that saves one from the fearful danger of

the modern era. One has given oneself over to the message, and now the others who shared one's world are known only in their capacity to themselves serve and bear a message. In this movement, Heidegger moves from speaking in shared time to speaking in *its* time. To become more Greek than Greek, Heidegger turns his attention away from the appearance and toward the clearing that would let the appearance appear—the stillness beyond the noise of birds and wind.

Aristotle answers: we may speak Being in different ways, but an orientation toward things that would see those things outside of their messy, noisy, busy matter is no longer rhetorical. The rhetorical thing arises from its matter in the course of involvement and concern. That matter contains within it prior dispositions and experiences, various aims and desires, and disputes over how the matter is to be spoken of here and now. All of these jostlings are brought together in and for the moment in a revisable decision over how the thing appears to be. The thing, in turn, rises from within the “the Scramble, the Wrangle of the Market Place, the flurries and flare-ups of the Human Barnyard, the Give and Take, the wavering line of pressure and counterpressure, the Logomachy, the onus of ownership, the War of Nerves, the War” in Kenneth Burke's telling ([23](#)), relevant and worthy of speaking precisely because it changes. To look for what does not change obscures the most vital aspect of the rhetorical thing.

6.4 SPEAKING FROM LIFE AGAINST DEATH

Comportment brings with it a way of seeing and determining a thing in its Being—Heidegger's philosophico-poetic comportment sees Being in the always, the most worthy, and the awaited, and labors his entire life to escape the changeable, small and demanding, where he can be released from shared time to Dasein's own time. He is comported toward the thing in that

moment before death. Perhaps Schrag's warnings about Heidegger's philosophico-poetic turn now make more sense—with neither the resources nor the desires of shared time to anchor it, speaking loses its connection to culture, ethics and politics.⁶⁰ In the final section of this chapter, I will look at Heidegger's own rhetorical failure, and contrast his recursive dialogue that strips everyday life out of speaking, to a rhetorical recursive conversation that strives to bring life in.

6.4.1 Heidegger's rhetorical failure

Now that we have seen life's rebuke to Heideggerian ontology, I am finally ready to address a concern the reader surely has for this entire dissertation project, that hangs over Heidegger's work: his collaboration with the Nazi party. I have waited so long not to ignore or minimize the problem, but to give it full weight in light of the preceding work. The answer to the question reveals what I believe is the fundamental difference between my rhetorical understanding of language and Heidegger's later philosophy. I contend that Heidegger's failure to situate the Nazi takeover in 1932 within a larger, shared ethical and political matter—his failure to understand what the event signified from the perspective of others who shared his time—inexcusably blinded the philosopher to the horrors to come, and is a clear sign of the failure of his philosophical comportment and disposition toward shared time.

All those who would avail themselves of Heideggerian philosophy must, as ethical and political actors in their own right, answer three questions regarding his engagement with the Nazi party: 1) Was Heidegger a Nazi? 2) If so, does the motivation to collaborate with the Nazi party also shape his philosophy? 3) If so, is that philosophy redeemable? The answer to all three

⁶⁰ Heidegger's failure to address culture and politics, and the shared speaking therein, is recognized by his own students. Hans-Georg Gadamer takes on everyday speaking in its shared cultural-hermeneutic capacity (its retrospective direction), and Hannah Arendt explores everyday speaking in its political-ethical capacity (its prospective direction). My concern is with everyday speaking in its rhetorical presence in the here and now.

questions, I believe, is yes. Yes, he was a member of the Nazi party. Yes, his early sympathies illustrate a pervasive, fatal ethical failing of his work. And yes, if we resolve to maintain that matters of concern over things that can be otherwise in shared time are not only *co-constitutive* of Being, but are *equally worthy of being spoken* and are to be returned to rather than escaped, we can avoid Heidegger's blindspot.

That Heidegger was literally a card-carrying member of the Nazi party as a matter of historical record is beyond doubt. He officially joined the party when he took up the position of rector at Freiburg. Was Heidegger, as a member of the Nazi party, an anti-Semite? No. The most charitable response to Heidegger's involvement with Nazism is that his rector's address upon taking the position offers a vision of German education that rejects Fascism.⁶¹ Heidegger, in other words, sees the political through the lens of the philosophical and pedagogical. He is awaiting an educational revolution, though it is not without a sense of foreboding. "So much is so dark and questionable," Heidegger writes to Jaspers less than a month before the Rector's Address, "that I sense more and more that we are extending into a new reality and that an age has grown old" ([HJC 146](#)). Even here, Heidegger stays focused on the path of philosophy: "Everything depends on whether we prepare the right point of engagement for philosophy and help it find the right words" ([HJC 146](#)).⁶²

The winter 1933/4 seminar "On the Essence of Truth," taught during Heidegger's brief rectorship, provides further evidence for the charitable reading. The seminar includes an extraordinary moment that indicates his clear rejection of anti-Semitism. Heidegger's lectures have an almost hermetically-sealed quality—when he refers to life outside the classroom at all, it

⁶¹ See, for example, Richard Polt's "[Heidegger's Secret Resistance](#)" and John D. Caputo's "[Heidegger's Revolution: An Introduction to An Introduction to Metaphysics](#)."

⁶² Four months later, in August 1933, Jaspers sends Heidegger an urgent letter about the rising Nazification of Heidelberg, where he is being marginalized as a faculty member with a Jewish spouse, and watches while students run for university government on platforms of cleansing the student body of Jews and Marxists. Heidegger does not respond.

is in very general terms. A walk to class, the sights on the street, the desk at which one sits, all stand in for everyday life. Specific contemporary events, particular matters of concern for the traffic and trade of those in the room, almost never arise. One day, however, things are different.

Heidegger begins by telling the students he will not address the subject for the day. He has something more important to say. The day before, January 29, 1934, famed German poet Erwin Kolbenheyer (author of *Paracelsus*) addressed the assembled student body and faculty of Freiburg titled “The Value for Life and Effect on Life of Poetic Art in a People” in commemoration of the first anniversary of the Nazi “revolution.” Kolbenheyer has not come to really talk poetry. He is speaking in his newly self-appointed role as evangelist for racial biology, a pseudoscientific justification for the biological superiority of the Aryan and inferiority of the Jew. Kolbenheyer argues that the *Volk*, defined not just by life but race, is what gives birth to the poet ([Neubauer 502](#)).

Heidegger tears into Kolbenheyer, scornfully denouncing the poet’s foolishness. Kolbenheyer knows nothing of philosophy, and worse, is a dangerous mouthpiece for the people in whose name he speaks. Being has nothing to do with biology save for having a bodily “supporting ground” that is not its “determining ground” ([Heidegger, OET 161](#)). Dasein does not reside in “gastric juices,” but in each person’s choices to confront the world fully and authentically.

One thereby perverts decision-engagement-freedom-the courage for sacrifice into a process that is encumbered from the outside and fit into the biological reality which has been presupposed as the only definitive reality, without seeing and grasping that in engaging oneself and enduring and sacrificing, a way of Being that is different in principle becomes powerful- different in principle from, say, the functioning of gastric juices and sexual cells and tending to the brood ([OET 161](#)).

No person, no race is born with less Dasein than others. Further, if Kolbenheyer is to be a leader of the people, the people and the revolution as a whole is lost.

Heidegger closes the session with his own definition of human essence. Asking *what* the human being is guides in advance the answer. If it is biological, the human now is reduced to biology. If the human being is in its psyche, all is psychological. If it is in spirit, all is ethics. Better to ask *who* the human being is. *Who* gives the human being a world and a self—the human being is the being for whom its own capacity to be is a problem. Seeing the human being as the being who faces decisions reframes what Kolbenheyer has deemed a “revolution.” Understanding the human being in its historicity—its engaging and enduring and sacrificing—is what will create a true revolution.

Terminologically, I have designated this distinctive characteristic of man with the word "care"—not as the anxious fussing of some neurotic, but this *fundamentally human way of Being*, on the basis of which there are such things as resoluteness, readiness for service, struggle, mastery, action as an essential possibility ([OET 164](#)).

Heidegger concludes, “[o]n the basis of this question concerning the essence of man, his Being is revolutionized, the way he stands in relation to his historical tradition and historical mission is revolutionized” ([OET 164](#)).

After resigning the rectorship, Heidegger gives the lecture *Logic as the Question Concerning the Essence of Language* ([LQCEL](#)) in the summer of 1934.⁶³ In it, Heidegger addresses Dasein’s relations to others as a *people*. The lecture, given ten years after BCARP in the shadow of expanding Fascism, remaps rhetorical publicness toward individualized, poetic ends.

LQCEL expands upon Heidegger’s definition of human essence in opposition to Kolbenheyer. First, the human being speaks. This speaking does not stand adjacent to things, but

⁶³ The lecture is mentioned in the Dialogue by title “Logic.”

brings things to light. To posit language as a means leaves one to conclude that language is “always only that which is belated, that which is of secondary rank, hull and shell of things, but not their essence itself” ([LQCEL 14](#)). The radicality of *logos* lies in its capacity to question its own foundations, what Heidegger calls a fore-question. The fore-question paves a way, draws out in the question what matters about the thing, and leaps out from a prior path that stands before it. The first “unlocks a realm” and launches, the second leads to a “determination of essence,” the third poses “concrete questions” and guards against “haphazard answers.” The temporal structure of rhetoricity, its guiding look, concrete given basic experience and prevailing intelligibility, then turned to conceptual foresight, forehaving and foregrasp, has now become the groundwork for philosophical questioning that always leads back to confronting our basic capacity to be.

The link between the rhetorical and the philosophical is alluded to in Heidegger’s comparison between the great project of Dasein and the small-bore concerns of everyday life. The capacity to question deeply is not simply constructed out of will, but follows the same smaller impulses of everyday average living—“what is great in Dasein is also small” ([LQCEL 19](#)) that the human being requires in order to exist in the everyday. Even the difference itself is rhetorical, based on the epideictic distinction between great and small: “The great is retained only if the human being succeeds in magnifying the great, that is, in demanding severity of himself in face of the great” ([LQCEL 19](#)). Once trained upon the great, the severity of greatness demands that one not waste time on the small.

Having established the role of language in Dasein’s capacity to confront its own Being, and to choose between service to what is great and what is small, Heidegger goes on to ask who then is the *Volk*, if the *Volk* gathers Dasein with others. Launching out, we are given certain

possibilities: We, You [plural],⁶⁴ You, and I. The *Volk*, like the human being, is not a *what* but a *who*. The *Volk*, Heidegger argues, is *we ourselves*, “cut[ting] off once and for all that we ask about types, eras, cultures” in sharp distinction from Kolbenheyer and other anti-Semitic propagandists ([LQCEL 33](#)).

The questions, as timeless questions that endure and in whose service we must also endure, draw Heidegger to conclude that he must choose thinking in service of Being over concerns with action. Some say that now “is the time to free oneself of reflection and start acting” ([LQCEL 24](#)) but to act without knowing who one is oneself robs one of choice. Who then, are the *Volk*, if the *Volk* cannot call us to act without our own choice in the matter? The *Volk* are we ourselves. With a quick pivot, Heidegger has seated the being of shared publicness back into Dasein in its own time. To be sure, Dasein is not an isolated subject, but it is because Dasein is already with others that it must break free in laboring and dealing, moved from the mandate of tradition and toward a mission. Dasein either chooses this labor or shirks it.

Dasein heralds the great moments rather than the receding into everydayness:

That which is properly historical lies always in the heralding of the great moments and their power for revolution, which gathers the entire happening in it, but not where one commonly seeks out history: in the pacified abating of the moment, an abating and fading away, which one interprets precisely as development from which the great moments look like interruptions and collapses ([LQCEL 132](#)).

In its everyday publicness, the notable is insignificant, a small interruption quickly put back to rights by “the sensible simplemindedness that stops at nothing because it already knows everything and better” ([LQCEL 132](#)). The rhetorical returns rather than awaiting, arrested by the moment. Against such smooth abating of the moment, an eruption of that which *cannot* be reckoned, a mystery whose lore is “overpowering and inevitable,” provides the happening of history “in its very solidity.” Now located in the genuine space of mystery so overpowering that

⁶⁴ This particular reading audience can substitute “Yinz.”

it halts our lives, the genuine speaking of a people is given to poetry. The *Volk* are realized as Dasein searches for and serves these great moments of mystery, but are lost to contemporary shared time: “the language of the poet is never of today, but is always in the manner of having been and futurally. The poet is never contemporary” ([LQCEL 142](#)).

The answer to question two is yes, there traces of Heidegger’s own blindness in his work. Heidegger has not necessarily ignored the historical and cultural milieu in which he speaks, but the answers he gives are incapable of dealing with speaking of things as matters of concern because he has selected out the worthy word at the cost of the surrounding matter. Heidegger has made his pronouncements from within his own time. In this time, the dark rumblings in the wake of the Nazi takeover are small in comparison to a great moment that heralds a revolution in philosophy and education. Heidegger cannot see that in the moment, for his own friends, colleagues and students, *their time is running out*. Awaiting a revolution in thinking when Dachau has already opened its doors is inexcusably foolish decision,⁶⁵ and demands that we question the judgment leading to such a decision. Heidegger has missed what is happening here, now because he is never contemporary.

Finally, in answer to the third question, can his philosophy be rehabilitated? Yes, but only if we keep a close eye on things that can be otherwise in shared time. Heidegger’s philosophy offers important contributions to rhetorical theory. First, his systematic working out of the temporality of everydayness, of how things are to us in the present initially, generally and for the most part, is invaluable. Additionally, Heidegger is right that the Being of rhetoricity will not be revealed in key words or theorems, and cannot be easily dissected into speakers, hearers and matters in isolation. The rigid definition of the thing, what it *is*, does not stand adjacent to its

⁶⁵ Heidegger took up the rectorship on April 21, 1933. Dachau opened as a concentration camp for political prisoners on March 22, 1933.

speaking, and we do not talk of speaking alone but rather we *speak of things*. Our world opens up in appearance, and that appearance folds things within matters as we are called to attend to and deal with those matters in conjunction with others who share our time and concern. The rhetorical thing can only be grasped in its appearance in the matter, marked by time, and its speaking reveals the basic hermeneutic of Dasein itself.

Should our own comportment turn away from the everyday, however, or should it allow the everyday to dim in comparison with “real” persistent Being, we will lose orientation toward speaking as a mode of being with others toward things, gathered together in matters. Rhetorical speaking is called from out of everyday dealings with one another in order to address those dealings because they *already matter*, not simply to us, but to those with whom we live. It is a choice to place speaking in the service of *life*. In order to show the future prospects for a rhetorical theory oriented towards speaking about things as they arise in everydayness, I will now describe an unfolding, recursive rhetorical conversation that keeps in dual consideration both the occasions and things of which we speak, as well as a concern for *how* we who speak and hear are to orient ourselves toward things that become otherwise in shared time.

6.4.2 The recursive rhetorical conversation

Rhetoricians engage in constant conversation over the relation between rhetoric’s objects and practices, but the mode of their conversation differs sharply from Heidegger’s philosophico-poetic recursion. The system cannot be settled and built upon as a solid foundation. The rhetorician is painfully aware of his or her insecurity because the things toward and from which s/he speaks are insecure in their very being. We ask over and over what speaks for the matter in the moment because we deal in matters that demand speaking. I close with an illustration of one

such recursive conversation, based on a series of essays first initiated in, and later reacting to, the 1970 Wingspread conference on rhetoric. In doing so, I hope to reflect back upon the question first raised in chapter one about the prospects for rhetorical research, now situated within the context of a particular historical discussion.

Rather than offer an exhaustive review of each essay, I want to focus on a handful of moments in which participants question the ground of rhetorical theory. First, I will discuss the motivating problem that Wingspread participants addressed, as embodied by Henry Johnstone's essay "Some Trends in Rhetorical Theory," and a voiced concern made by Carroll C. Arnold in the conference's closing session. I will then examine Carole Blair and Patricia Bizzell's responses to Wingspread in the 1996 Rhetoric Society of America's conference proceedings *Making and Unmaking the Prospects for Rhetoric*. Finally, I will close with an investigation of the relation between this dissertation's arguments and two contemporary positions from 2010's *Reengaging the Prospects of Rhetoric*, the first by Steven Mailloux and the second by Barbara Biesecker.

Both revaluations (in 1996 and 2010) of *The Prospects of Rhetoric* observe that the Wingspread conference is marked by its moment in time. The assembled scholars struggle to understand their discipline in light of a moment in which "[o]ur campuses were on fire" ([Black 24](#)). Perhaps the greatest marker of the moment is itself an absence in the face of death. As the introduction to *The Prospects of Rhetoric* notes, Professor Phil Tomkins of Kent State University had been invited as a participant to the follow-up Pheasant Run conference in May 1970 but was unable to attend in the aftermath of almost unthinkable tragedy: four students dead at the hand of their own government ([Bitzer and Black vi](#)). The book of essays emerging from Wingspread and Pheasant Run is marked by the moment in which the word meets the gun.

Henry Johnstone addresses the 1970 Wingspread conference from his perspective as editor of *Philosophy and Rhetoric*. As Steve Fuller points out in his 2010 response, Johnstone begins on a note of humility—he comes as a philosophical interloper only newly familiar with rhetoric—but proceeds to offer some rather pointed pronouncements for the future of rhetorical study ([Fuller 69-70](#)). Johnstone’s essay contains a note of exasperation. Faced with massive political and concomitant philosophical upheaval taking place both in America and Europe, the traditional forms and practices of social and intellectual discourses seemed to scramble to keep up.

Johnstone expresses anxiety over being called to make projections for rhetorical theory when so much is already in flux:

Trying to see ahead to rhetorical theory a decade from now is like trying to see infrared rays. The conditions for visibility to not yet exist. By this I mean that the problems that rhetorical theory ten years from now will have to cope with probably have not arisen yet. And they are problems that cannot even make sense to us until their time has come ([80](#)).

Nevertheless, Johnstone speaks to the problems of his own time. The rhetoric of the New Left troubles Johnstone in its refusal to engage in traditional, expected argument. The struggle to articulate a moral valence of rhetoric indicates to Johnstone a reaction to increasing use of technocratic judgment that calls itself value-free. From a technocratic posture arise attempts to scientize the rhetorical, a tendency Johnstone finds ominous. In response, Johnstone advocates attempts to reframe rhetorical ontology in such a way that it is not the imperfect reflection of a perfectly computer-like rational world. A phenomenological rhetoric, Johnstone suggests, might be able to speak to the intersection between the physical/material and symbolic. To grasp the phenomenon of rhetoric, one would have to then enfold its means of transmission, extending rhetorical theory to mass communication. And finally, argumentation must be able to speak

across these areas of study—from unruly protest, to moral decision-making in the face of technoscientific discourse—in a way that encapsulates both the reality and possibility of the things with which argument deals, in the environments in which it deals.

In a rather touching biographical epilogue, Johnstone indicates that this disciplinary anxiety is twinned with his own personal shift in thinking. After nearly 30 years of philosophical study, Johnstone no longer believes that logical procedure has full purchase on being, living and speaking. If, philosophically, Johnstone advocates a position of pluralism—that things can be otherwise—his analytic posture cannot be a slave to logical consistency:

My own view of the nature of philosophical argumentation itself has also shifted in the last decade. [...] My rationalism has accordingly been unstable and precarious. On several occasions I have attempted to buttress it, but the attempts were mere stopgaps. I think it is now a thing of the past (87-8, ellipses added).

Johnstone himself suggests a Heideggerian turn, in which rhetorical agency is seated in Dasein's self-disclosure, as a being that moves and is moved in the world, and in that moving must confront itself (88). In light of Johnstone's confession, his questions take on a different tone: not combative but plaintive—what counts now? How am I to judge? The ground has been yanked out from beneath him.

Johnstone's anxiety follows along with what was, by participant accounts, a vital theme of conversation between scholars at the conference but appears in a fleeting moment in the transcript from the conference's final session. If we turn to phenomenology, what is not rhetorical? Lloyd Bitzer later recalled a particular interaction:

After a morning session at which the notion of “rhetorical phenomena” has been considerably expanded, [Lawrence] Rosenfield—in the afternoon conference—returned to the expansive notion and remarked, with seeming exasperation, “So far as I can tell,” the notion of rhetorical phenomena “includes everything but tidal waves.” [Richard] McKeon's immediate quip was “Why not tidal waves?” (19-20).

In Wingspread's final meeting, Samuel Becker, chair for the group tasked with summarizing the Conference's proceedings and building recommendation for Pheasant Run's follow up in May, summarized the group's conversation and then asked if there should be anything added to the record. Carroll Arnold spoke up:

I can think of only one thing to add relative to the last question. It is the problem of how we shall even think about the rhetorical process if we adopt some of the phenomenological and existential observations about the nature of rhetorical 'logic' and the mode and methods of observing it. That's where our heat and excitement developed in discussion. So I think this is certainly an especially important issue. It was reported as just one item in the agenda, but it occupied our whole last hour of discussion, and it could be the most fruitful of questions" ([Bitzer and Black 181](#)).

In his follow-up essay, Arnold broaches a version of the Kantian dilemma. Arnold is most interested in the discussion of rhetoric as *method* and thus "a way of looking at—a way of interpreting—issues and meanings" ([198](#), emphasis in original) Yet Arnold refuses the Kantian mistake of relegating active interpretation to structured logic, wherein the speaking *cannot* address matters of rhetoricity:

It was said that when subjects, data, and their meanings can be interpreted as assented to simply by distinguishing facts from nonfacts the 'method of rhetoric' is inapplicable, but issues on which meanings *cannot* be determined by fact-nonfact judgments are precisely those on which decisions can be reached only through rhetorical considerations of the *choices* available to men ([Arnold 198](#), emphasis in original).

In other words, the rhetorical thing—that which one can properly claim as rhetorical—is precisely the thing that is inexpressible in terms of logical procedure. In turn, of the rhetorical thing is not bound by fact-nonfact judgment, "that in humanistic and social studies fact-nonfact judgments simply cannot yield final *determination* for critical questions" ([Arnold 199](#), emphasis in original).

Arnold gives two directions for rhetorical research. Comprehensive rhetorical scholarship expands the categories of beings considered rhetorical. Penetrating rhetorical scholarship interprets rhetorical transactions phenomenologically, existentially and traditionally. In the interaction between defining the being in the context of life, and drawing from these beings revisable ways of determining rhetoricity, Arnold's recommendations describe a constant returning to things from theory, and constant rebuilding of theory from things.

In order to determine the direction for rhetoric in the face of shifting political discourse and position of the university in civic life, participants confronted dual questions: rhetoric what and rhetoric how? What did new forms of rhetoricity mean for scholarly theory and practice? Note, already, how procedural interpretations of rhetoric, marked off by concepts and practices, are suddenly themselves called into question by that which falls outside of the traditional parameters and demands study and response. The shifting being of rhetorical engagement is drawn directly out of the shocking and painful upheaval of life. Opening rhetoric to the phenomenon provides a broader field for what can be taken as rhetorical and what cannot, but that broadening may come at the cost of either redefining or destroying traditional classical rhetorical concepts. What counts now? How are we to judge? Why not tidal waves?

The recursion in 1996's *Making and Unmaking the Prospects for Rhetoric* turns from a what question—what are the prospects of rhetoric—to a *who* question—who speaks and listens. In the wake of intellectual renewal already underway in 1970 and itself coming into power, rhetoricians ask “who counts now? How do we judge?” Respondents, beginning in Roxanne Mountford's framing essay, specifically note the lack of women and minorities in the conversation, though the Wingspread conference does deal with the rise of popular identity-based movements ([Mountford 7](#)). Below, I argue that the question “what *things* we call

rhetorical” may help to clarify two important concerns about the range of rhetorical theory and practice identified by Carole Blair and Patricia Bizzell. Blair asks: toward what—or more sharply, toward *whose*—end is the rhetorical speaking aimed? Bizzell: from where and whom does the rhetorical emerge? One questions the ground with an orientation toward what is to be, the second questions with an orientation toward what already is.

Blair worries that the post-structural turn to symbol-construction leaves rhetorical study with a “jack of all trades, master of none” problem. Blair contends that a focus upon the symbolic leaves us batting at signs and symbols while remaining mute on the material conditions that demand action. “Symbolicity diverts us from rhetoric’s fundamental capacity to do things, rather than simply *mean* something” ([Blair 32](#)). We must move, in other words, from a concern with theory to one centered on practice. Rhetoricians should see as practitioners.

Rhetorical practice, Blair says, “still has material consequences” ([33](#)). I agree, but I would not leave the material as a *consequence* of rhetorical practice. Instead, in the being of rhetorical speaking, the material *is already consequent*. It has already called forth speaking. A determination of material essence cannot solve this problem—there are no materials that are, strictly speaking, in and of themselves rhetorical. Rather, the consequent aspects of that material are drawn out and solidified in rhetorical engagement—i.e., there contains in rhetorical speaking a determination of *what matters* about the thing in the context of *this matter*, and it is in the light of these relevant aspects that one engages in practice. Such a concretizing of concern marks the thing in time—it is consequent in its material capacity to become otherwise in shared time. In other words, rhetoric do not just “do things,” but does things with, toward and about things—and the things we *do* are determined through struggling over the things that demand our attention

because they could be otherwise. The limit, in turn, is not in formal disciplinary or logical categories of being, but in how that being is taken in time.

If Blair is concerned with the rhetorical in light of what speakers and hearers *do*, Bizzell is concerned with who speakers and hearers *are*. The post-structural subject is called forth by and respondent to the event or situation, within institutional and ideological regimes. Bizzell worries that a focus on the subject as the “subject of” something, say *power*, may occlude the capacity of speaking (and for that matter hearing) to constitute agency, say *empowerment*. “I accept that sense is not created by individual choices autonomously,” Bizzell writes, “but it seems to me that sense for the individual emerges in large part from the personal and communal histories that converge in her” (40). Bizzell seeks an understanding of the post-structural self that would authorize speakers and hearers to act toward matters without presuming that each have full autonomous agency: “the subject can become critically aware of, though not distanced from, these histories—and the more historical consciousness, the more potential to bring the individual’s unique creative energy or serendipity to bear on the mix” (40).

With regard to Bizzell’s position, I avoid talk of subjects, objects and agents given my Heideggerian phenomenological bent. Dasein always exists simultaneously as a being that moves and is moved (a perspective with which Bizzell in principle, if not vocabulary, agrees). At each turn, from rhetorical speaking, to philosophical concept-formation, to poetic world-making, Dasein is called forth from its world and those within it already underway as history, and in that calling forth confronts its own possibilities to choose and act. Dasein first finds itself in its being-moved, becomes an actor only in patency.

Reorienting the rhetorical toward things enables a better perspective for understanding the relation between subjectivity and agency—otherwise, we are stuck simply trying to locate a

position between poles (actor/patient; speaker/hearer) without reference to things with and toward which people are subjected or acting. The *Rhetoric* begins with things. The speaker as agent moves toward a particular desired decision over the thing, and can only do so by keeping the hearer close, understanding both oneself and the thing as subject to the hearer's history and desire. The hearer follows the speaker along and confronts a decision over the thing between possibilities that the speaker has brought to light, but still maintains the ultimate power to decide. Both speaker and hearer have a share of agency and patiency, and come into being in speaking, hearing and dealing *with things* that can be otherwise in a time both must share—what is here, now, in this moment for us.

The relation to materiality becomes far more pressing in 2010's *Reengaging the Prospects of Rhetoric*, both in terms of institutional material resources and traditions, and the relation of communication to material, scientific and political life and knowledge. In the recursive conversation, a what-question (what is the ground?) becomes a who-question (who are we that speak and hear each other?) becomes a how-question (how are speaker, hearer and matter to relate?) As Fuller writes,

What to an establishmentarian scientist might look like an eclectic mish-mash of ideas and practices, on closer inspection constitute a principled and discriminating selection, designed to contribute to a specific way of being in the world [...] However much we continue to rely on scientific expertise for what we believe and do, we ultimately bear the brunt of the consequences of our beliefs and actions (82).

How is the tradition to inform both what we are now and what we will become? How is speaking related to materiality? From what do we come, and toward what do we aim? Stephen Mailloux offers a tentative answer to the first question, Barbara Biesecker an answer to the second. The third is my own.

In response to Edward P. J. Corbett's 1970 essay "Rhetoric in Search of a Past, Present and Future," Mailloux asks again how traditional rhetorical concepts are to speak to contemporary contexts. Mailloux's questions for consideration are temporal—how are we to bring together what we might call, using Heidegger's language from *LCQEL*, rhetoric's traditional mandate, its mission toward the future and its labor in the material present?

How much does today's newness owe to classical rhetorical traditions? How does the translation of those traditions work? [...] What are the historical, social, economic, institutional, geographic, technological, and other conditions of this translation process? What does this rhetorical translation process tell us about the contingencies of the past, the needs of the present, and the prospects for the future? ([Mailloux 176](#)).

Rather than evacuate the present for that which remains the same and in that sameness fulfills history and destiny (becoming what it always was), Mailloux's questions indicate that the now becomes a site for both reflection and projection. Rhetorical theory must reread its own past and future through the now, and return to it in renewal.

As referenced in my introductory chapter, Mailloux highlights Heidegger's *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy* as one example of possible site for further rhetorical theoretical and historical research. *BCArP*, for Mailloux, presents a moment that both undergirds the post-structural turn and provides an example of rereading rhetoric's tradition in a contemporary context ([176](#)). This dissertation is, then, a response and fulfillment of Mailloux's call to think theoretically, instrumentally and transactively ([179-180](#)). Theoretically—prospectively—we have explored the structures and delimitations of rhetoric read through a hermeneutic, phenomenological philosophical comportment. Instrumentally—conceptually—we have seen how the resources of rhetorical theory can be extended through a focus on temporality, while marking off the limits of that extension. Transactively—retrospectively—we have looked back at how the foundational concepts of rhetorical study through an re-interpretation of

Aristotle's *Rhetoric* in light of early Heideggerian phenomenology, and a re-valuation of Heidegger's late philosophy from a rhetorical perspective.

I find the most affinity with my own work in Barbara Beisecker's "Prospects of Rhetoric for the Twenty-First Century: Speculations on Evental Rhetoric Ending with a Note on Barack Obama and a Benediction by Jacques Lacan." Though we use different theoretical vocabularies, our conclusions are roughly the same.⁶⁶ In Biesecker's terms, the Real towards which the rhetorical grasps—what the thing *is*—can never be fully accessed in language. "The Real is, then, quite simply Lacan's name for the lack in the Symbolic with respect to which, it is significant to note, all ideologies labor tirelessly" ([Biesecker 26](#)). It is not simply that words and things are different, therefore words about things are incomplete. Rather, the very entrance into language necessitates a cutting off from pure presence from the beginning, "the acceptance of a primordial symbolic pact" that still affirms "the capacity of speakers to do *real* things with words on the condition that those words open onto the Real" ([Biesecker 25](#)). Even when our speaking *does things*, our speaking is removed *from those things* in a way that cannot be bridged. What

⁶⁶ The affinity between Lacan and Heidegger is not accidental. Lacan reads the Freudian "*das Ding*" through a Heideggerian linguistic turn. Lacan's use of "*Das Ding*" in *Seminar VII: The Ethics of Psychoanalysis*, resonates with the rhetorical thing's pressing reality that still stands beyond us. *Das Ding* is at the heart of the split between nature and culture—that which one desires with deep need but, once entered into language, cannot have because possession would leave nothing more to desire. For the rhetorical, it is the reality of the thing of which it speaks and toward which it aims but cannot possess:

What one finds in *das Ding* is the true secret. For the reality principle is a secret that, as Lefevre-Pontalis pointed out last time, is paradoxical. If Freud speaks of the reality principle, it is in order to reveal to us that from a certain point of view it is always defeated; it only manages to affirm itself at the margin. And this is so by reason of a kind of pressure that one might say, if things didn't, in fact, go much further, Freud calls not 'the vital needs'—as is often said in order to emphasize the secondary process—but *die Not des Lebens* [the "need" or "necessity" of life] in the German text. An infinitely stronger phrase. Something that *wishes*. 'Need' and not 'needs.' Pressure, urgency. The state of *Not* is the state of emergency in life ([46](#)).
[...]

Das Ding is that which I will call the beyond-of-the-signified. It is the function of this beyond-of-the-signified and of an emotional relationship to it that the subject keeps its distance and is constituted by primary affect, prior to any repression. [...] It is then in relation to the original *Ding* that **the first orientation, the first choice, the first seat of subjective orientation takes place**" ([Lacan 54](#), bold added).

full evental speaking must do is acknowledge that distance between speaking and things, in the course of still trying to *do things*.

We may desire full communion with things in their complete presence, but we will never fulfill that desire. “Full, evental” rhetoric *confronts* the Real, however, when the speaking faces its own incompleteness, as only a fragmented gesture or hint of a conversation that must keep coming. “[T]he failure of representation—the utter impoverishment of the sign into mere signifier—is full speech’s and evental rhetoric’s positive condition” ([Biesecker 27](#)). Thus does the rhetorical simultaneously claim and deny the simple symbolicality of its being. It is *as it appears for now to us*, but can in its deepest and most needful Being be otherwise. As an example, Biesecker points to Barack Obama’s 2008 inaugural address—though in this moment, here I take the office of the Presidency, this campaign is about you the People. Not you essentially, but you as you desire and must labor to be, and you as you have been as a people that brings change *to* Washington. Both the Presidency and the People have been voided and given to movement and change. They become in the moment what they always were—but this contains within it a lack. It was incomplete and is still to come.

Such an approach looks similar to Heidegger’s unveiling of Being in hints and gestures, but unlike Heidegger’s position in the Dialogue, Biesecker concludes that holding out for pure presence waits for a time that will not come. That time is a fantasy that can never be fulfilled, only traversed. There is no practice of speaking that overcomes the distance between the symbolic and the real. The place of rest, stillness, and complete being is not something that can be attained or possessed, but rather only appears as a consolation before the ultimate reality of death. Full evental rhetoric acknowledges its own lack, and in that lack presses on without expectation of completion: to *do things* that will never be finished, claimed or persistent *to*

things we will never fully grasp beyond their capacity to be otherwise. Biesecker closes with a Lacanian anecdote. Faced by the god of thunder, the Devas recognize the power of the word, their speaking to each other and the power from beyond: *Da, da, da*. We hear.

In view of such a rhetoric directed toward things in their reality though always outside, let us raise again the rhetoric-of problem. As argued in chapter [one](#), the rhetoric-of problem has two rough forms. The rhetoric-of deals with talk about the thing, and the rhetoric-of deals with the process of talking that produces the thing. Now we can see the dual horns of the Kantian dilemma, the fate of Aristotelian research. In the former case prevails a Husserlian/Platonic eidetic consideration of formal composition of the logos (deconstructive, transgressive and anti-hegemonic though it may be) from which meaning arises and the thing becomes a thing. In the latter prevails a Diltheyian/Sophistic psychological consideration of mental compositional process of the logic (situational, historical and emotional though it may be) from which the thing arises and becomes a thing. In either case one misses the connection between thing and speaking in time, and fails to see between the poles. The thing *precedes* the saying of it, and *projects* out of it, bound in the now. To understand the relation between word and thing, we must focus on how it arises in a matter taken under concern in shared time. The thing does not stand outside the speaking, waiting to be found by the right word, nor is it more perfectly emergent from proper procedure. It is with us in its change, as something that can be otherwise.

Perhaps it is now time to confront the same fantasy of complete speaking myself. Rhetorical theory returns to the question of its essence and origin again and again, so often that it seems almost nervous and is ashamed of its constant uncertainty in comparison to its disciplinary peers ([Mailloux 177](#)). *Why aren't we more like...What's so special about us?* Such constant return is not a neurosis. It displays the rhetorician's care toward a world that changes in time, and

a confrontation with the rhetorician's own self in response. As Thomas Slone observed in 2010, looking back on Wingspread,

For in their social context the words seem to belittle the importance—or, to use a word heard much in that period, the *relevance*—of the conferences, centered as they were on the rhetoric of all things. Yet by its nature as the study of effective speech, rhetoric necessarily involves the study of contemporary and ongoing developments (and revolutions, for that matter) in the 'real world' ([Sloane 2](#)).

How do we find ourselves? We keep finding ourselves in our own upheaval.

The claim that I have named the nature of rhetoricity—what it *really is*—itself seems deeply hubristic. Look, though, at the definition I have repeatedly offered: speaking of that which is capable of being otherwise in shared time. In other words, *it is what it appears to be to us for now*. What things are, and who we are, will change. What stays the same is that as things change and we change with them, we will again ask questions of our tradition and our destiny in light of the moment. We enact the movement of the *Rhetoric*—where Aristotle works from speaking's *insecurity* rather than its security in logic—and in this way, we become what we always were. I mean to mouth no empty platitude but to suggest that rhetorical theory, having defined itself in the context of its relation to things in changing time, take the structure and movement of things in expressed, shared time seriously as a way of gathering together disparate interpretations of events.

My claim to the rhetorical thing's essence is aimed at its capacity for change, its before and after held within the now. The rhetorical *is* a thing that can be otherwise than it is, and its Being is in the movement and change of life and time. I am not dodging a totalizing ontological claim; I am making such a claim as strongly as possible. What is indeed *most relevant*, what marks the thing as it is, is the capacity to change in the here and now, contoured by how it has come before us and for the sake of which it is aimed, gathered together in the speaking we share

in a region of traffic and trade. That we have been having a recursive conversation is an extension of rhetoric's nature. It is a speaking *from* rhetoric.

6.5 A FEW NON-FINAL WORDS

I first read the Dialogue on Language nearly a decade ago, and have spent much of the interceding time in pursuit of its meaning. Now asking in retrospect, what motivated the pursuit? What made this thing a matter of concern? There was something—still at the time undefined—in Heidegger's metaphor that accorded with my own sense of life, and yet there also sounded a deeply discordant note. I was hearing *something*, but did not know yet what. Ignoring Heidegger's own admonition to leave mystery be, I pursued the enigma.

What accords? For Aristotle, metaphor rings true when it shows us something that speaks vitally of life—both in what we know and what remains obscure and enigmatic—in its doing and making and dealing as a thing in time. In the moment, which is fragile, fleeting and uncertain, there is in our speaking a showing of our own Being and that of others, and that showing (*phainomenon*, appearance) is the business of rhetoric. It is the rhetorical thing. I then searched for how rhetoric could do so: what kind of thing *is* in appearance? The capacity for rhetoric to manifest things had to be read through what it does—when it is enacted, undertaken and at work. It is there already, as time is already in our saying of time: before, after and now, and marks movement in a world already underway.

Next, I searched for the rhetorical from the basic ground of life, in the speaking of things that could be otherwise in shared time. The *Rhetoric* had guided my thinking since I was an undergraduate debater learning argument from the classics, and I read the Dialogue with an

already Aristotelian ear. I went back again to the *Rhetoric*, searching for the things of which we speak in time. I found in the *Rhetoric* an architecture of spoken temporal presence. The thing appears in the now and becomes present in aim, disposition and speaking, and each of these temporal directions contains a relation to speaker, hearer and matter, each with a share in the moment of decision. Rhetoricity arises from and addresses those who share time in the traffic and trade of everydayness.

Having found the accord, I was ready to address the discord and offer a counterspeaking. To be faithful to the Heideggerian demand to define the Being of things from those things rather than an external system of signification, I would have to reject a second demand. Rather than stand resolved before Being against the flux of concern in everydayness, I would have to stand resolved before everydayness against the silent persistence of Being, to take the rhetorical *as it is*. For Heidegger, Aristotle's *Rhetoric* provides the ground from which he will leap into philosophy—not just in 1924, but in 1934, 1944, 1954.⁶⁷ Again and again he leaps away. But if one must stand resolved before Being, I would stand resolved as well, and hold that the origin of speaking is rhetorical. I would stand before the decision and refuse to jump. Back again to the Dialogue.

The discord was now clearer than ever. For Heidegger, the revelation of Being is so great and demanding that all small things shrink away in its presence, like a thousand distant stars blotted out by the sun. For this very reason, the Dialogue is sterile. Small things are a part of life—indeed, they are the initial, general and prevalent parts of life. Small things that come and go give life its liveliness. In contrast to Plato's vibrant cast of characters, Heidegger's dramatic characters never have full lives already underway. They have few investments or distinct

⁶⁷ 1924: *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*; 1934: *Logic as the Question Concerning the Essence of Language*; 1944: *Introduction to Philosophy: Poetizing and Thinking*; 1954: "The Dialogue on Language."

perspectives, and as a result do not struggle to share things in time with one another. Train schedules (to Florence, to Dachau) pale in comparison to the importance of speaking in the time of Being. In Heidegger's *Dialogue*, no wind blows, no birds chirp, and there is no other voice to challenge his own—both men speak with one voice.

Goethe's silence, as Adorno described, is a brief consolation for the end of life—a lovely parting gift, if you will. You will have a moment all your own, subject to no claim of others, but that moment will be your own death, or more benignly before sleep. Held in service to the question of Being and a death that is all his own, Heidegger is consistently blind to the light of Being in the shared time with others, and he scorns anyone that would see possibilities of greatness in the small things of shared talk. To while his time awaiting, in the splendor of the moment, Heidegger must still all small things living and dealing with the concerns of everyday life. Nothing presses him to choose here and now. It is the uncanny stillness and silence that I find so discordant with the noisy sharing of everyday life. Strictly and phenomenologically speaking, for the human being, there is no true silence, perhaps save before sleep and death. Even in sensory deprivation chambers, one hears the beat of one's own heart.

J. Robert Cox observes in "Cultural Memory and Public Moral Argument" that in public memory, those gathered in a region of concern have opportunities to engage in repetition and confrontation with its own history. The recursive conversation brings with it the tools of tradition and trade, raised again when the common patterns of life have been disrupted.

Despite the will to forget, a common identity appears in our anticipation of "a time when." The strength of painful memory lies in this perception of difference: the vision of what is 'not yet,' Thus what is remembered is radically different from what *is*; it exists in the present, nevertheless, as a hope or promise. Because our time is not the end of evil, memory also becomes a rhetorical obligation, a need to preserve the image of an 'other'—freedom, an end to war, peace ([Cox 13](#)).

Cox's description of memory as the dialectical site of negotiating our shared space—of sharing time with one another not accidentally but as mourned in loss, awaited in promise and maintained in speaking—captures in the moment of speaking a repetition that nevertheless opens history up to change. Things can be otherwise.

Let me close with a personal example of such a light of Being shining from a small moment that ties back to both the Wingspread conference and its revaluations. In the summer of 2000, just home from my first year of college, I listened to the radio in the kitchen with my father. The 30th anniversary of the Kent State massacre had recently passed, and a piece in remembrance played while we went about our household chores. I noticed that my father, a 49-year-old mild-mannered moderate liberal, was upset by the report, angrily spitting curses under his breath aimed at anyone who tried to rationalize the shootings.

“Jeez Dad, you’re *still angry* about Kent State?” I asked with the sense of unearned worldliness mastered by 18-year-olds. My father was 19 on May 4, 1970, a sophomore at Virginia Tech. He turned around and stared at me, as his expression changed from angry to deeply sad.

“You don’t understand, Cate. They were shooting at us.” He gestured toward himself. “They were shooting *at us*.” Words failed; he shook his head. I saw tears shining in his eyes for a moment, and looked away in shame—because shame lives before the eye. We went back to work in silence.

These were not four dead kids in Ohio for my father, or an entry in the history books as they were for me. Though he knew none of the victims and witnessed the horror only in mediated accounts, these students *were* (not *were like*) his friends. They were *him* and *us*. He shared their time so vitally that 30 years later, as a grown man, he would be moved to tears by

the presence to memory, and could moved me to shame that I did not honor his time as he honored theirs—even when we were *so much alike*. 18, 19, 20, 21, protesting in pursuit of the noble, not yet knowing that things turn out badly. He listened to me make something small out of something great, heartbroken. No wonder scholars after Wingspread reacted so strongly against original participants’ seeming disdain toward flower children’s unruly speech. *They were shooting at us.*

The destructive pull of the Anyone is matched in strength by the constructive capacity to take on another’s time. Seen from a rigid position that demands Dasein always take up its own time, taking on another’s time brings with it a share of “inauthenticity.” The concern for culture and politics brings with it a share of inauthenticity. Speaking with one another about everyday concerns, or through technologically mediated environments, brings with it a share of inauthenticity. *Life is dealing with inauthenticity*, ceding to the possibility that our time is not entirely our own, and we share things in time with others. Of course speaking and things are not the same—that is *why we talk so much*, because that which has been, may be, and is here now could be otherwise than we say. Yet, if we want to not make something small into something great, then a share of inauthenticity that allows us to care about matters of concern to others is small compared to the glimmers of Being inside, and the work of making our shared lives easier to bear.

In 1963, Heidegger was visited by a young Buddhist monk from Bangkok. According to Petzet’s account of the meeting, Bhikku Maha Mani taught philosophy and psychology at the University of Bangkok and worked with the national radio system to produce educational programs. The monk came to interview Heidegger for a program on the German Southwestern Radio Network television channel. Before the broadcast, Heidegger and the monk spoke for two

hours about the relationship between East and West, and the philosopher was so impressed by the monk's thoughtfulness that he allowed the very rare television appearance.⁶⁸

Heidegger pressed Bhikku Maha Mani on the question of technology, asking whether the monk thought it possible to bring about a shared understanding of something so deep and difficult as Being and Nothing through mass technological means. The monk, untroubled, replied "[w]e never say no to a thing in advance" ([Petzet 173](#)). The monk asked why Heidegger refused to "go to the people" of Germany as he would to the people of his own village—they were, after all, Heidegger's countrymen too ([Petzet 179](#)). Heidegger became agitated—people are too closed off. They are predisposed to avoid thinking. The monk replied like a rhetorician, "perhaps it depends on precisely these individuals—and that they are everywhere" ([Petzet 179](#)). Heidegger's objection, interestingly, is based less on a rejection of technology in itself, and more a rejection of the *doxa* inevitably produced thereby: "Still, Heidegger insists that television is not a genuine means, because what is said in it is not binding and is subject to distortion" ([Petzet 179](#)).

The monk abandoned his attempt to persuade Heidegger. Without any sense of dissonance, Heidegger has claimed that technological communication with the public is impossible because the hearers are predisposed toward being closed to possibility, yet when questioned, he too is absolutely closed to possibility and has said no in advance. Heidegger and the monk parted, and afterwards Heidegger remarked to Petzet that he thought the young monk bright, but foolishly naïve regarding technology.

The anecdote closes on a mean-spirited note. Petzet writes, "Heidegger was right. A year (or perhaps more) after this meeting with the monk, he phoned to tell me something sad: The monk had left his orders and taken a position at an American television company" ([181](#)). The

⁶⁸ Today video of the interview survives on Youtube thanks to user "Thai Philosopher," which would distress Heidegger to no end. See "[Interview: Martin Heidegger and Thai Monk Bhikku Maha Mani](#)."

monk, who so clearly and quickly grasped Heidegger's own saying, is reduced to the butt of a joke, a fool led astray by naiveté. The story does not have quite the triumphal ring Petzet wishes. So single-mindedly revolted by the modern era and its petty people, Heidegger would shut out anyone who was sullied by participating the time, its people and its technology—even one who so quickly understood what Heidegger had been saying all his life ([Petzet 178](#)). Like the Japanese friend, the monk is present only as a figure supporting what Heidegger already believes, and any dissent is dismissed out of hand as ignorance. It is Heidegger who comes off making something great out of something small.

My father first saw himself in those dead students at Kent State through an American television company. Our conversation was sparked by a program on an American radio station. Yet through all those supposed layers of remove, in the moment, there took place an absolute sharing of another's time—or shame at failing to do so. *You don't understand, Cate. They were shooting at us.*

Heidegger wrote a letter to Karl Jaspers, his old friend and eventual accuser, in 1950 to finally admit his own failings. Heidegger claims that he cut off his relationship to Jaspers because he was too ashamed to look Jaspers' Jewish wife Gertrud in the eye. "Since 1933, I no longer came to your house, not because a Jewish woman lived there, but *because I simply felt ashamed*" ([HJC 186](#), emphasis added). Shame is the disposition that brings Dasein to confront itself in the eyes of others in whose world Dasein shares. Others judge us to be less than what we should be, and with great pain we accept that judgment and see our own failure.

Heidegger failed Gertrud, in the same way his rector's address failed his students and colleagues. Rather than meet their eyes, he consoled himself with solitude and silence and turned his own eyes toward Being. Despite spending years searching for the presence of Being in time,

Heidegger could not see what mattered in the moment because he was blind to the time of others: “even as I said *yes* [to the rectorship] I did not see beyond the university and did not notice what was actually happening” ([HJC 186](#)). Do not let Heidegger off the hook. If Dasein is its choices, Heidegger chose to see what he wanted to see and look away from those who stood in mournful accusation. He chose not to confront himself in the light and eyes of others, or to attend to things in time he shared with others.

The rhetorician should not look away from life as it presents itself to us, in the things shared with one another in the time of our common traffic and trade. To advocate for a turn toward things is not to reject the relation between speaker and hearer—for it is with these things that speaker and hearer create a shared region of concern. But these things are projection neither of consciousness nor conscience, and are not made of discourse alone. These things are shared in public, by those everyday others in a region of concern on whom, as the monk says, matters in shared time depend—precisely because these people are everywhere. We do not say no in advance but *da da da*, “yes yes yes.” We must look instead at the decisions we face together over the things and time we share. We must look to what is here now, and *how* it is, for the *how* is what matters.

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